Poverty, Justice, and Jobs:
Filling Leadership Gaps in Access to Economic Opportunity

An overview of ideas from the Harvard University Advanced Leadership Initiative Think Tank, in collaboration with the Charles Hamilton Houston Institute on Race and Justice
Poverty, Justice, and Jobs: Filling Leadership Gaps in Access to Economic Opportunity

An Overview of ideas from the Harvard University Advanced Leadership Initiative Think Tank, in collaboration with the Charles Hamilton Houston Institute on Race and Justice

Faculty Co-Chairs
Rosabeth Moss Kanter
Charles J. Ogletree

Sponsored by
Advanced Leadership Initiative
Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice

April 30 - May 2, 2009
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- Introduction: The Think Tank Premise .................................................................1
- What Are The Facts, Faces, and Facets of Poverty? ............................................3
- Urban Poverty ........................................................................................................5
- The Importance of Political Will for Governmental Action ..................................12
- Transforming Communities: Interconnected Cross-Sector Solutions .................14
- Louisiana as a Laboratory for Community Reinvention ......................................16
- Leadership for Change: The Challenge for Advanced Leaders ...........................19
- Think Tank Agenda ..............................................................................................22
- 2009 Advanced Leadership Fellows ....................................................................23
- Advanced Leadership Faculty ............................................................................24
Introduction: The Think Tank Premise

The Advanced Leadership Initiative at Harvard University (ALI) is dedicated to educating and deploying a leadership force of experienced leaders who can address challenging national and global problems. An important part of the process is to stimulate discussion among experts and advocates about the gaps that can be filled by Advanced Leaders, including the Advanced Leadership Fellows at Harvard who are preparing to transition from their primary income-earning years to their next lives of service. Each year, ALI convenes three solution-finding workshops called Think Tanks to delve deeply into the nature of problems, their potential solutions, the barriers to change, and the ways that Advanced Leaders can make a difference.

Economic opportunity is intertwined with conceptions of social justice. Communities, and the public context and institutional structures that form them, can either perpetuate poverty or ensure access to an adequate standard of living and quality of life. Basic education and public health were the focus of the first two 2009 Think Tanks convened by the Advanced Leadership Initiative (ALI) at Harvard University; both surfaced and discussed issues of disparities and inequities in access to education and health care in the U.S. and around the world. The Poverty, Justice, and Jobs Think Tank broadened the focus to examine the community context in which poverty occurs.

The overall challenges were framed by Think Tank co-chairs Professor Rosabeth Moss Kanter, the Ernest L. Arbuckle Professor of Business Administration at the Harvard Business School and Chair/Director of ALI; and Charles J. Ogletree, Jr., the Jesse Climenko Professor of Law, Founder and Executive Director of the Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice at the Harvard Law School, and an ALI Co-Chair.

Kanter described why leadership to address this class of problems is more difficult than simply great leadership of a single organization. There is little consensus about goals, the pathways are not clear, a complex nexus of institutions and stakeholders are involved, there are often multiple centers of authority, and the solutions involve not simply tangible investments but also culture and behavior. It is thus important to understand problems in the context of communities that themselves are both political and social entities, often with competing interest groups, as well as in the context of the structure of social institutions – e.g., specialization that divides responsibility for education, health care, infrastructure, job training and opportunities, and so forth.

Ogletree focused on one large, persistent problem: the long history of racial disparities in the United States and the failure of piecemeal decisions, including Supreme Court decisions outlawing racial segregation in public education, to ensure equal access to opportunities. Even with the tools of the law and the promising new programs started by social entrepreneurs in urban communities, he explained why more needed to be done, more comprehensively and connecting many different institutions. He invoked the Marshall Plan following World War II in which the U.S. invested heavily in rebuilding Western Europe and shaping its social institutions. Just as former U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell had called for a Marshall Plan for Africa, Ogletree called for an imaginative new
version of the Marshall Plan for urban communities in the U.S. He underscored the Think Tank’s emphasis on reinventing entire communities (such as the rebuilding of communities in Louisiana triggered by Hurricane Katrina).

The challenges of poverty stretch beyond simply having less money than others—as though that weren’t challenging enough. There are also damaging deficits in access to education, to political systems, to economic opportunity, and to healthcare, decent housing, and nutrition. Often these wants are compounded by a lack of the sort of community cohesion that might help produce workable solutions. Advanced Leadership can help create integrated solutions, as Kanter and Ogletree stressed.

The Think Tank moved from a diagnosis of the issues to a search for solutions. Discussions proceeded from facts and analysis to urban and global contrasts to forms of leadership for change involving integrating solutions connected at the community level, including:

- Basic facts about poverty and social institutions;
- Urban challenges and solutions to poverty in the United States;
- Challenges and solutions to poverty in the developing world;
- Needs for political will and government investments;
- Needs and opportunities for comprehensive solutions at the community or regional level, reinvention in Louisiana after Katrina as a case study;
- Leadership for change: lessons for social entrepreneurs and advanced leaders.
What Are The Facts, Faces, and Facets of Poverty?

Poverty refers to both relative and absolute conditions: both the bottom of an income scale and also the absence of opportunities for education, health, and family well-being – the dysfunctions generally associated with economic deprivation. But the circumstances in these arise and the question of the correlation between relative wealth and social dysfunctions are complex matters. Income depends on productive work, whether from employment or self-employment. The strength of economies thus affects the size of the bottom of the pyramid as well as absolute life chances. Harvard Kennedy School Dean David Ellwood, a former Clinton administration anti-poverty official, described four macro-economic or situation factors that also could be framed as an agenda for lifting people out of poverty:

- “Make work.” Good economies make a huge difference because they create jobs and enable self-sufficiency. “When economies stumble, poor people fall,” he said. Work must also pay enough. Governments can use mechanisms such as tax credits for the lowest-paid to ensure a sufficient standard of living;
- “Create a ladder.” Mobility is a second factor: getting the next, better job, or innovating in an enterprise to stimulate growth;
- “It takes a family.” Single-parent families account for a high proportion of those in poverty in developed countries;
- “Demography is destiny.” Over-population can depress economies, as in sub-Saharan Africa, but under-population can also threaten prosperity, as in the aging population and below-replacement reproduction in Western Europe, an issue also commented on by Hans-Ulrich Maerki, Advanced Leadership Fellow and former Chairman of IBM Europe, Middle East, and Africa;

Overall, 4.5 billion of the world’s 6.2 billion total population live on the equivalent of less than $5 a day, as Harvard Business School Professor V. Kasturi Rangan pointed out. The scope of poverty is thus immense. But it is also a relative matter, defined by both standard of living and the status of the poor at the bottom of a pyramid of wealth. Members of groups stigmatized by race or ethnic differences are disproportionately found among the poor in every society, as are people with disabilities. As Advanced Leadership Fellow James Kaplan highlighted, the 50 million people with disabilities in the U.S. (of which physical disabilities represent just a fraction) are also likely to be at the low end of the scale.

The U.S. Census Bureau sets the domestic poverty level at $16 per person per day, noted Mary Jo Bane, Professor and Academic Dean at Harvard Kennedy School of Government and also a former Clinton administration welfare official. (This standard was recently supplemented by the Obama administration with an experimental effort to account for regional differences in the cost of living and to measure the effects of anti-poverty policies.) In contrast, the World Bank puts poverty in the developing world at $1.25 per person per day. The difference seems quite stark until it is put in the context of developed vs. developing economies. Bane made a sharp distinction between urban and rural poverty—the former predominant in the United States and the latter more prevalent elsewhere in the world, especially in Africa and South Asia. She observed that “academics who study poverty in the U.S. almost never study poverty in developing countries. The two academic worlds are separate and almost never meet.” She then put forward the question of whether poverty in the United States and poverty in the developing world “really are different problems” that should be addressed through fundamentally different approaches.
Urban poverty, said Bane, is defined by “who you are, what skills you have, and what your family situations are.” In the United States, solutions are aimed at providing people in low-income communities with a quality education, training in job and life skills, and help in coping with stressful family dynamics and, frequently, racial inequity that makes opportunities hard to obtain. Rural poverty, in contrast, is often characterized by populations living in inhospitable environments that lack the assets of basic infrastructure, effective government, and access to water and other natural resources—which together form the basis of economic development. Sometimes, according to Jeffrey Sachs, Columbia University Professor and Director of the Earth Institute, these marginalized populations are indigenous people forced from their original homelands. “It’s rarely the natural condition that people have chosen to live near the desert, or in desperately impoverished conditions,” Sachs said. Reducing poverty in the developing world, then, is mainly a matter of place-based economic development. In other words, it’s more about where you are than who you are.

Although rural poverty is mainly a function of place, even relatively disadvantaged places vary in their standards of living and access to economic opportunity because of governance, showing that leadership and political will makes an enormous difference. Harvard Kennedy School Professor Robert Rotberg observed that if you happened to be in Africa, your chances of living in poverty are quite high. They would be lower, however, if you lived in either Botswana or Mauritius—two well-governed nations that have become the fastest growing and most prosperous in Africa. “Escaping poverty in Africa doesn’t depend on international aid—although some of that can help—but on improving governance,” said Rotberg. “[T]he well-led countries are rich, and the poorly led countries are poor.” By good governance, Rotberg said that he means a standard of government performance whereby “essential political goods” are available to citizens: the rule of law, security, human rights, economic and human development—including education and healthcare. This requires investments in the quality of service delivery to ensure high achievement. Rotberg also pointed out that Singapore pays its teachers and civil servants amounts equivalent to a corporate manager, and Singapore has the highest income per capita in Asia.

Thus, Think Tank discussions differentiated between urban and rural poverty, although some economic development solutions overlapped, and the Think Tank featured examples of leaders able to change institutions, either from formal roles in government or as social entrepreneurs operating through civil society to create model programs.
Urban Poverty

In contrast to rural poverty, the urban poor live in cosmopolitan cities that are rich in resources, opportunities and infrastructure. So, what keeps city people poor? The entrenched long-term effects of urban poverty include such perpetuating factors as racism, street crime, domestic violence, high rates of incarceration, limited access to health services, and—above all else—failing schools. In the U.S., the connection between education and incarceration is striking. Third-grade reading scores are used as predictors of the number of prison cells needed in ten years.

Together, these conditions damage people’s spirits and create a permanent culture of low expectations, depression and anger. Social entrepreneurs, often community members themselves, have addressed some of these issues that reinforce disadvantage. Several models for dealing with the problems of incarceration, violence in all of its manifestations, and job skills training were discussed at the Think Tank as examples of what Advanced Leaders can do.

Injustices from brushes with the justice system: ending the cycle of incarceration

High youth unemployment is a problem in most urban areas, and it is particularly troubling for African-American males, one of three of whom is likely to have a brush with the criminal justice system before the age of 30. Wilson Goode, the former mayor of Philadelphia and founder of the prize-winning program, Amachi, decried the disproportionate effect of the criminal justice system on young black males. “[T]he prison industrial complex—especially for African-American men under 35 years of age—is nothing short of the second coming of slavery…. We [have to] begin to dismantle this system, so that children with a parent in prison will have a real shot—if we can mobilize a few million volunteers in this country who are willing to spend just one hour, once a week, with those children.”

Goode was the son of sharecroppers in the rural south whose father went to prison when he was young. Through the encouragement and intervention of the pastor of his church and the pastor’s wife, Goode was able to go to college and avoid a fate that visits many children of prisoners: that incarceration often becomes an inter-generational contagion in families. He cited research showing that seven out of ten of the children of prisoners will be incarcerated themselves. Goode told a story of a grandfather, a father, and a grandson all in the same prison at the same time who met one another for the first time there. For this reason, Suffolk County Sheriff Andrea Cabral indicated that she felt her responsibility extended beyond maintaining the jails into improving the community, developing programs for re-entry into society to prevent returning to prison.

“Children suffer when parents go off to prison,” Goode said. U.S. Court Judge Vanessa Gilmore, of the Texas Southern District, described the suffering: from feelings of anger, grief, abandonment, and sometimes from having too much responsibility thrust on them too early in life. Gilmore, the co-author of a coloring book for the children of incarcerated parents, is accustomed to seeing angry young people in her courtroom. Likewise, when she goes out to speak at schools, she sometimes finds angry children awaiting her. Talking to a group of 50 middle-school girls with behavior issues, she asked for a show of hands on how many of them had parents who were incarcerated. “Fifty girls, fifty hands,” said Gilmore. This situation led Gilmore to become a social entrepreneur on the side, developing and distributing the coloring book.

Hoping to disrupt the cycle of incarceration, Goode established Amachi, a national program that provides support to the children of incarcerated parents. One of the more surprising difficulties Amachi encounters is finding those children—because prisons often do not gather information about the children and other family members of prisoners. Part of the work of Amachi involves
going into prisons and interviewing inmates so as to be able to contact their children. Once in contact, Amachi assigns each child a mentor, much as the successful Big Brother/Big Sister program has done for more than a century. “We know that someone who drops out of school is eight times more likely to end up in prison than those who do not drop out of school,” Goode said. Mentoring stems the tide of dropouts, which occur at a rate of 7,000 a day. One of Amachi’s major challenges, he said, is “finding enough black men in our country to mentor black boys.”

In nine years the program had matched 175,000 children with mentors. “What we know,” said Goode, “is [that] if there’s a loving, caring adult in the life of a child for one hour, once a week, for at least one year, two-thirds of those children improve their grades. Two-thirds of them improve their behavior in school. Two-thirds of them improve their attendance. The critical ingredient here is the relationship.”

Other systemic actions can be taken for the prisoners themselves by those with positions in law enforcement, such as Sheriff Cabral and Judge Gilmore. As a judge, Gilmore was often dismayed by the rate at which people on parole or probation re-offended and were sent back to jail. “There were no second or third chances.” Gilmore has championed so-called “prisoner re-entry courts,” where the emphasis is on “making sure people don’t go back to jail.” This involves changing the mindset of parole and probation officers from being reflexively punitive to focusing on helping the ex-offender succeed. Working as a team, she said, the court and law enforcement “bring together all the resources that we can to make that person’s reintegration into the community successful.”

Moving youth away from violence
Incarceration is one indicator of higher rates of violence among the urban poor of certain racial and ethnic groups. This can be both cause and effect of poverty. Many people find it easy to understand that the free-floating anger of unrelieved poverty can cause otherwise resolvable situations to escalate rapidly into violence, said Dr. Deborah Prothrow-Stith, the former Massachusetts Commissioner of Health. Harder to grasp, however, is the notion that violence can cause poverty. On the individual level, as Goode observed, entanglement in the criminal justice system can become a ruinous family pattern that perpetuates poverty through generations. Prothrow-Stith pointed to macro consequences as well: “I’ve had this discussion with several conservative thinkers who say that people aren’t investing in urban poor communities the way they might, say, invest in Eastern Europe because of the issue of violence.” To combat the damage violence does to poor people and communities as a threat to public health, Prothrow-Stith favors violence-prevention programs that help young people develop their emotional intelligence to use in coping with anger and stress. She emphasized that there is hard evidence that such programs succeed in reducing violent impulses before they can ripen into destructive acts.

Innovative coalitions at the community level can also reach young people. In Boston, the level of violent crimes had been reduced to among the lowest in urban areas in the nation through several coalitions led by social entrepreneurs in collaboration with established community leaders and government officials. The Ten Point Coalition was founded as a collaboration of African-American ministers dedicated to ending youth violence and opening opportunity. The city government’s “Streetworkers” program of youth workers who could relate to street gangs was described by Robert Lewis, Jr. Lewis, who had been among the original streetworkers. He later served as executive director of City Year Boston and other organizations before returning to the Mayor’s youth program and eventually the Boston Foundation, which revived the program’s concept under its “Streetsafe” initiative, which runs in collaboration with the Boston Police Department. These community resources provided role models – for example, of former gang members and even drug
dealers who had transformed themselves into community leaders with legitimate careers. They provided constructive activities – for example, midnight basketball games. They provided guidance about de-escalating violence on the street.

**Job training and opportunities**
Finding jobs for at-risk youth is an important step in motivating them to stay in school and giving them a vision of a payoff from their investment. There are numerous examples of mentoring and tutoring programs that come from public-private partnerships, and many city governments enlist the local businesses in finding summer jobs for young people – but in insufficient numbers. Particularly in a recession, the challenge is to get youth the job skills they need and a paycheck. An additional benefit for disadvantaged communities is that this same cadre of youth can provide necessary services that improve the community, such as affordable housing, and reduce the factors that produce poverty.

Think Tank participants discussed two examples begun by social entrepreneurs: a small start-up in Seattle and a large national program. Youth Force was described by its founder, Jeffrey Stein, as a temporary employment agency for high school students. Local employers could hire trained young people for part-time, relatively low-skill work. By working with Youth Force, employers (including large companies such as Microsoft), could be assured of getting temps who had support systems behind them while also contributing to the community. Youth Force seemed effective in keeping young people in school and motivating high performance. Youth Force had recently been acquired by the Boys and Girls Club, which would ensure its sustainability and opportunity to be replicated elsewhere.

A program that has already grown and is consistent with President Obama’s emphasis on “green jobs” is Youthbuild, a nationwide network of 226 programs that focus on educational and leadership development, job training for at-risk youth, and construction of affordable housing. To date, Youthbuild has employed 76,000 at-risk young people in building 17,000 housing units. “There’s a power locked in the poor house, locked in the young people who we’ve given up on, that we have the ability to liberate if we understand the power of love,” said Founder and Executive Director Dorothy Stoneman. “We need to demonstrate to the young people, in ways they never expected, that we care about them. That means going with them to court. It means sitting by their side when their mother is dying or in a coma…. When we do those things, we surprise them so much that they’re willing to engage.”

Youthbuild teaches academic and job skills and puts young people to work in their own communities. “[T]hey need to change their whole identity,” said Stoneman. Youthbuild’s method recognizes that its clients are burdened both with a “history of external oppression” and with a poverty-amplified form of depression. “So, they walk in, they get respect—respect for their intelligence. They meet loving adults, they get a pathway to opportunity, they get people saying you can do it, and here’s how you can do it…. And suddenly, they’re the heroes in the community instead of the hoodlums. They’re the people with hardhats and books instead of drug dealers. And they change their identity in the eyes of their grandparents and their community.”

Youthbuild began in East Harlem, where Stoneman lived for 24 years after graduating from Harvard. “What I learned as a member of the civil rights generation, as a white privileged person, was … to be subordinate to, accountable to, and embedded in the local community. To listen to and take direction from the people who lived in East Harlem and the young people themselves; to put the young people on our boards … and ask them ‘What do you think about how we should change this program, this community, this society and this world?’”
“Show me the money”: capital for business development

Low-income areas with high rates of poverty lack access to the means to invest in enterprises that can create jobs and lift people out of poverty. The absence of financial services exacerbates lack of access to capital and perpetuates a cycle of poverty. Community-based financial institutions can increase opportunity. They have also proven to be profitable as commercial enterprises. Gail Snowden, former President of First Community Bank, a bank-within-a-bank started at Bank of Boston and expanded after acquisition by Fleet Bank (now Bank of America), described FCB’s success as showing that there was a viable market for banking services in the inner city. FCB eventually grew to 160 branches in 5 states with $5 billion in deposits and 1700 employees. By extending debt and credit services, FCB contributed to real estate and housing revitalization and job creation as small businesses garnered capital to take hold and grow. Although FCB had top management support from the beginning, middle managers often viewed it through racial and ethnic biases. But FCB’s success as a retail bank, and eventually as a cluster of banking services, helped institutionalize it as a force for change.

Other kinds of financial services can address the challenges of poverty-laden communities. Tim Ferguson, managing director of Next Street Financial, created with partners a merchant bank for access to capital and financial services in territory near Snowden’s home base for what he called the “missing middle” – enterprises with $1-100 million in revenues with growth potential that lacked services. Seventy percent of Next Street’s clients are minority or women-owned. Next Street found that they not only lack access to capital, they often need business advice in many areas; Next Street added an advertising agency and talent management advice to help their clients grow. Biases remain, just as Snowden found. Ferguson cited the fact that racial and ethnic minority-owned businesses grew twice as fast as comparable enterprises during the past decade, but such businesses were denied bank loans at rates that were 5-6 times higher.

The discussion of urban poverty in the developed world has focused heavily on disadvantages and opportunity barriers associated with racial divides. In developing contexts, similar barriers exist, including lack of access to capital, but sometimes there is a gender divide. In fact, the factor most correlated with a country’s level of development is the education of girls.

Educating and empowering women and girls: preconditions to poverty alleviation
In Africa, as well as in rural areas in Asia, economic participation is preceded by education as well as the empowerment of women to have voice in decisions. Vivian Lowery Derryck, a 2009 ALI Fellow and formerly the assistant administrator for Africa with the U.S. Agency for International Development, shared some of the benefits of girls’ access to education, based on her experiences in Africa: higher labor force participation, later marriage, fewer children (the average in Africa is six per family), and higher civic participation rate. Derryck said that she would also have higher crop yields per hectare in farming, thus contributing to economic development. Nonetheless, she said, “There are still huge disparities between the number of girls that become educated and the number of boys.” So, when she advocates to national leaders and government ministers about the importance of investing in girls’ education, she stresses the economic consequences. If they choose to focus only on educating boys and men, “they’re going to lose half of the potentially qualified labor force. This is a detriment to national development.”

To attempt to close the gender gap, Iris Bohnet, a professor at the Kennedy School, described applying an experimental methodology—such as would be used in a clinical trial—to assess the effectiveness of various strategies in villages in rural India. In 1993, the Indian constitution was amended to decree that one-third of all village councils should be led by women. That created ideal conditions for comparing the differing effects of male versus female council leadership. The first wave of women leaders provided, by objective measures, more accomplishments of an equal quality than their male counterparts in other villages; yet they were perceived, stereotypically, by their own constituents as providing fewer accomplishments of a lower quality. The second wave of women leaders, however, were perceived to be performing as well as the objective measure of their accomplishments. So, said Bohnet, “stereotypes changed over time.”

Bohnet also described an experiment done by some Harvard Business School colleagues in Zambia, which was then trying to bring down its fertility rate by introducing family planning. In a control group, both husband and wife were informed they could meet with a nurse to discuss family planning; in the study group, only the wife was informed. “The likelihood that the woman would actually go and talk to the nurse in the clinic was much higher if you only informed the women. That matters because we know that men and women tend to have different fertility preferences, with women preferring fewer children than men.”

Using market and enterprise solutions: social value through profits
It is certainly an over-simplification to say that the poor lack money, but as in the case of urban poverty in developed countries, lack of access to capital holds back those at the bottom of the pyramid in developing countries. David Ellwood’s earlier exhortation to “make work” is the focus of enterprise solutions: the provision of capital to help the poor start and grow enterprises and the scaling of enterprises that can both employ community members and provide them with higher levels of services to improve their lives (and further employment prospects).
Microfinance has been discussed widely since Mohammed Yunnis won the Nobel Prize for his creation of Grameen Bank in Bangladesh. Accion International adopted a similar model in Latin America. Michael Chu, a senior lecturer at Harvard Business School and former Accion chairman, illustrated the value of the profit motive, as a guarantor of sustainability, by sketching the lifecycle of a Mexican microfinance bank from its founding to the present. The bank was the eventual outgrowth of a social NGO that, in 1990, began making micro loans as part of its work in Chiapas and Oaxaca, the poorest areas of Mexico. “By April of 2007, it had become a full-licensed bank … issuing shares on the Mexican Stock Exchange. The value that the market placed on this institution -- which, even today, has loans that average less than $500 -- was $1.5 billion.” Noting that an investment of $6 million launched the bank in 1999, Chu said that in his earlier career doing leveraged buyouts on Wall Street, his “best returns were in the mid-30s.” The bank demonstrates “the impact of getting something that has social value, like providing financial services for the poor, mounted on a very robust business model.”

Chu outlined four conditions for business success in responding to poverty:

- An imperative to reach massive scale;
- The goal of having the business last for more than a generation (so that it’s “here for today’s poor, their children, and their children’s children”);
- A business model that enables continuously improving performance…
- …and continuously declining costs.

Business, said Chu, is “the only thing I know that can provide, consistently and in a sustained way, those four things.” However, he stressed that it’s far more important to build an industry than a single company, because industries persist even as businesses eventually die. “[And] you have to have competition…. That’s why it’s fundamental to create an industry.” The bank Chu described has 1.2 million clients and “a return on average equity in the 40th percentile. It accomplished every goal that it had established for 2008. And its fourth quarter 2008 was better than its fourth quarter 2007. And I don’t think there are many banks in this world that can say that.”

Women are the recipients of a high proportion of the smallest micro-loans. Their involvement in economic development is crucial, as indicated. Nancy Barry, who spent 16 years as President of Women’s World Banking (WWB), described the organization’s mission: to expand microfinance for women in the world’s poorest regions. The work of WWB helped build the network of lenders, from grassroots NGOs to large mainstream banks. In the early days, Barry said, when WWB tried to hook women up with commercial banks, “[w]e learned very quickly … that the banks had no interest in having dirty people, let alone women, in their branches. So it became necessary to show the bankers how to bank with poor women and men.” That led to “a tremendous amount of experimentation”

whose main output was the insight that it was important to involve a variety of institutions—microfinance NGOs, regulated microfinance banks, cooperatives, and credit unions. “The key is not legal structure [per se],” said Barry. “The key is performance”—and that “policies, regulations, and legal structures be able to support a range of these institutions.”

In creating its network of affiliates throughout Africa, Asia, and Latin America, said Barry, WWB applied “tough love” in the form of minimum performance standards “in terms of outreach, in terms of portfolio quality, in terms of efficiency, profitability and the poverty of the people that [banks were serving] in order to become a member, and in order to remain in the network.” Affiliation with WWB grew in later years to include male-led organizations with shared mission and
values as well mainstream banks. The result is that the client base grew from 20,000 in 1990 to 23 million by the end of 2006.

According to Kash Rangan, the test of a social business model is whether it develops the operational discipline and practices that will enable it to scale. “A lot of social entrepreneurs confuse the ends for the means,” said Rangan. “If the end goal is to reduce poverty, then the means … should involve business methods, taking debt financing, growing scale. However, a lot of social entrepreneurs get carried away by their passion for the cause…. Venture capital, or donations, or charity money can see [a social enterprise] through its first phase of operation. But if the expression of concern stops there, we don’t make a dent in the poverty problem.”

As an example of achieving scale, Rangan described the work of India’s Aravind Eye Hospitals in extending eye care to poor patients—including in remote rural settings. In 2008, Aravind served three million outpatients and performed 300,000 eye surgeries. Two-thirds of its patients are poor and receive their care free of charge. The remaining one-third of patients paid for care at the going rate. And yet, said Rangan, Aravind earns a 50% net margin. “How is this possible? How can a company that gives away two-thirds of its products ever make such a big margin? Brilliant management principles!”

Aravind is renowned for innovation in surgical processes, medical technologies, and materials. Surgery is performed in operating theaters organized as assembly lines. Surgeons are 10 times as productive as their counterparts using conventional techniques. Aravind attracts the best talent, and the quality of patient outcomes is unsurpassed. The profits are plowed back into the business. Aravind thus uses innovation not as an engine of profit in the conventional sense, but as a way to scale its work to address what in the past has been a widespread eye-care crisis in India.
The Importance of Political Will for Governmental Action

Poverty has many “parents”—easily identified causes rooted in economics, history, politics, geography, social structure, inequality, discrimination, and other forms of injustice. Despite the many persuasive explanations offered for poverty’s persistence, the easy habit of many cultures is nonetheless to turn away from the sight of it. Poverty too often is seen, cruelly, as the fault of the poor themselves—a moral failing or lack of ingenuity and initiative. This bleakly judgmental view takes the non-impoverished world off the hook and forecloses constructive conversations about solutions that will work.

Numerous examples were cited of the ways that government policies can move beyond welfare payments to put people to work or ensure skills for the future. Mary Jo Bane described the Progresa program in Mexico offering cash transfers to the poor for sending children to school and health clinics; in India, a national rural employment guarantee, offers cash for work, reaching millions of people. Jeffrey Sachs pointed out that small, low-cost steps can make a big difference—for example, on health issues that are a major barrier to eradicating rural poverty in the developing world. He said that “the difference between dying of extreme poverty and having a foothold in development is tiny. It’s $100, maybe $150, per person per year.”

The challenge is local, national, and global: to gain attention and the political will to act in one’s neighborhood, nation, or (as a matter of humane contributions) poverty-ridden areas of the world. Globally, Sachs pointed out that “extreme poverty on the planet” could likely be ended with an investment of no more than .7 of one percent of rich world income. “Public finance is essential,” he said. “Without public provision, we will not succeed.” He cited a book by Lawrence Katz and Claudia Goldin, The Race Between Education and Technology, which argues that the reason “America got ahead for 180 years—roughly from 1800 to around 1980—was public finance for public education. That’s what made it possible to have the broad lift of society.” However, the Reagan era initiated a period of gradual disinvestment in public education and, more broadly, in the social safety net. Sachs called for a renewal of political action as a form of self-help that the poor and the advocacy community must engage in. Rev. Al Sharpton, radio host and former candidate for the Democratic Presidential nomination, issued a similar call for advocacy for change in the U.S., saying that the financial meltdown “raises a tremendous opportunity for us to put pressure on the Congress and the President to put in place some structural reforms to deal with the issue of poverty and democratize the economic order.”

Education was invoked often as the dominant and indispensable element for eradicating poverty. A quality education was cited, variously, as the pathway to better jobs and economic mobility; to improved self-esteem; to a triumph over injustice, anger, and internalized depression; to political access and empowerment; and, in the aggregate, to civic renewal, improved national competitiveness, and the flourishing of hitherto untapped ideas and perspectives. As Wheelock College President Jackie Jenkins-Scott pointed out, investment in education should reach to early childhood, a period not yet included in government expenditures for universal public education, even though Head Start, a poverty-fighting early childhood program from the 1960s, is often-cited as an example of a federal government program that brought a high return on investment.

“The only answer to poverty in this country is education,” declared Pennsylvania Governor Edward Rendell. Inadequate education in the areas of basic literacy, science, and math are a problem for the poor and a problem for the nation. Speaking from the U.S. domestic political trenches, Rendell made it clear that the need for investment in education vastly outstrips the ability of the political process to respond. When he became governor in 2003, Pennsylvania “did not give a nickel of
state money to early childhood education [or] to pre-kindergarten education.” Now the state spends $500 million earmarked to fund pre-K, full-day kindergarten, and reductions in class size. The state also allocates $220 million to put laptops in every classroom (grades 9-12).

But Rendell, like other speakers, was frustrated over the inability of successful programs to expand to serve the full need. (For example, he wanted to get laptops to students below 9th grade, down to the 5th grade.) Moreover, the ailing economy has put at risk continued funding of some of his initiatives. “I’ve got a legislature that, despite concrete evidence to the contrary, is scared to spend money, even if it’s the wisest investment in the world. They’ve got me to blame, if they want. And they’re still afraid to spend.” Rendell encouraged the business community to help “influence” legislators to stand up for education by voting with their wallets the next time a political fundraiser comes around.

Crisis can sometimes activate the political will. Tulane University President Scott Cowen also put education reform as central to ending the cycle of poverty. He described the work of not only rebuilding but rethinking public education in New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina, an effort he was asked to lead by the Mayor. (Other new transformational models in Louisiana will be described later.) That effort is built on four key principles:

- Authority should be decentralized down to the individual school level—putting the money in the schools and getting rid of the central office as much as possible;
- Investments must be made in quality teachers and principals. To make decentralization work, you have to build up intellectual capital;
- Parents must become involved, grow their sense of ownership and equity in the school, and believe in it as the pathway up for their children;
- It’s essential to attend to all the needs of a child, not just when they’re in school. Make sure they have healthcare and that parents can read well enough to help kids with homework.

New Orleans now has the largest percentage of children in charter schools anywhere in America. Cowen sees charter schools as a means to the end of empowering and giving more autonomy—and accountability—to students, teachers and principals. To date, student achievement in New Orleans, in charter and non-charter schools alike, has gone up 17% post-Katrina.
Since the causes of poverty are numerous and interlocking, and the conditions of poverty affect so many aspects of people’s lives, some of the most effective solutions are necessarily omnibus in reach. Thus, efforts to improve K-12 education have to go beyond school buildings into students’ homes, neighborhoods, daily nutrition, local law-enforcement and public-health infrastructures, and prevailing community cultures. This often requires bridge- and coalition-building among social programs, local churches, hospitals, community leaders, public officials, businesses, you name it. Examples of such approaches show how focused, specialized interventions can be combined to impressive effect.

One widely-lauded model is the Harlem Children’s Zone in New York City. William J. Wilson, Professor of Sociology at Harvard, described the comprehensive network of services encompassed within HCZ, the brainchild of education visionary and reformer Geoffrey Canada. Canada’s mission, said Wilson, was “to flood a number of blocks in Harlem with educational, social, [and] medical services to create a comprehensive safety net.” Anchored by two reform-oriented charter schools—called Promise Academies—this ambitious 97-block laboratory has been designed to surround children with “a web of community services, from birth to college graduation, to provide a supportive and positive social environment outside the schools.” Among the services provided are The Baby College, a nine-week program for expectant parents that covers subjects ranging from coping with parental stress to discipline, parent-child bonding, and brain development; and an all-day pre-kindergarten, called Harlem Gyms, that works to develop language and pre-literacy skills needed in kindergarten.

Research by Harvard economist Roland Fryer has shown the positive effects of early interventions through The Baby College and Harlem Gyms. Eighty-one percent of Baby College parents reported that they read to their children more often than before they joined the program; and 100% of the Harlem Gyms pre-K enrollees were deemed school-ready at the start of kindergarten. At the two Promise Academies—which must select their incoming classes by lottery—100% and 97% of students, respectively, scored at or above grade level in standardized math tests, equaling or surpassing their peers in middle-class white suburban schools. HCZ’s model is one that President Obama has indicated the desire to replicate nationally as federally-funded “promise neighborhoods.”

The starting point for integrated models of community transformation can come from any sector. In Liverpool, England, the agent of change was a sports team. The Liverpool Football Club operates on the world stage out of a decrepit neighborhood in Liverpool; it has 30 million fans in 124 countries, according to Andrea Titterington, who carries the title Regeneration Leader. The surrounding area has been poor for 150 years and was filled with boarded-up buildings, reflecting a long-term cycle of poverty involving high unemployment and drug abuse. The Football Club used the occasion of a new stadium to revitalize rather than abandon the area. Involving community residents in visions and decisions, the club contributed heavily to schools and a health plan as well as other community resources.

Cohesive communities stand a better chance of opening opportunity for the disadvantaged. Rosabeth Moss Kanter stressed the importance of social cohesion—“a sense of shared fate and shared humanity”—as the prerequisite for effective community action. South African education reformer Alistair Witten suggested an equally powerful dynamic: that creatively run schools can be
a central force in developing more empowered, cohesive communities. Witten, who recently served as interim director of the Principals’ Center at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, spent 12 years in Cape Town, South Africa, as principal of a school in one of that country’s roughest, poorest townships. He described a comprehensive model for school-centered community service delivery.

According to Witten, South Africa sees schools as shared public spaces, “sites of social cohesion” where—in addition to teaching and learning—a wide range of community development activities and services can be assembled. “Improving education in South Africa has to go hand in hand with strengthening the very communities that the schools serve.” In that context, a commitment to educating the whole child logically extends to improving the lives of whole families, and of the community at large. Therefore, schools offer literacy and skills training to students’ unemployed parents and to other community members. The schools can contain workshops that generate income for parents; for example, clothing shops to make garments for students. Schools have made land available for community gardening to help feed families. At Witten’s school in Cape Town, he raised seed money to launch and operate a business on school grounds, ultimately providing welcome employment for parents and at-risk children. Witten’s school also functioned as a focal point for community problem solving. “Through the school, we get the community voice to really emerge,” said Witten.

The school as community center and job creation mechanism is a striking example of the benefits of “thinking outside the building,” as Rosabeth Moss Kanter puts it, to connect sectors and organizations that have traditionally operated in isolation to improve opportunity across the economic spectrum. Stanley Litow, vice president for Corporate Citizenship and Corporate Affairs at IBM, joined with Kanter to envision an urban environment where digital information and functionality are embedded in the infrastructure, enriching civic life in countless ways. This infrastructure could both be used by people, interactively, to locate public and social services, learn about job and training opportunities, and find amenities, events and entertainment options; and to serve as sensing nodes to collect real-time data about the performance of public systems (bus and subway operations, for instance), and to monitor air and water quality and public safety conditions. In addition, it is important to “strengthen the human infrastructure”—connecting people to one another, within and across groups, and to the city as a whole. The ability to tap into these interconnections “can be used by visionary, innovative leadership to create sustainable solutions that reduce costs, focus resources on those items high on the public agenda, [and] forge connections among organizations with similar goals.” Productive cooperation is hampered when so many nonprofits with overlapping missions compete for funds from a finite pool of donors: “Fragmented services reinforce the barriers that have historically made it difficult to share standards, compare best practices, reduce duplication, or reward top performers across service systems or geographies.” That would lead, Kanter and Litow asserted, to “less poverty and more prosperity, less exclusion of racial or ethnic groups, and more equality of opportunity.”
Louisiana as a Laboratory for Community Reinvention

Hurricane Katrina, which struck the Gulf area in 2005 and whose damage was disproportionately felt among the poor, triggered a search on the part of city and state leaders for not merely rebuilding but reinventing the region. It became a place for experimentation by social entrepreneurs in partnership with government and the private sector, one from which new ideas might spring to benefit the nation. Louisiana Lt. Governor Mitch Landrieu posed a challenge to Think Tank participants: “Do you want the opportunity, or not, to rebuild the United States of America and to make her as great as you know she can be? Or do you want to pass? Because the opportunity, truly, is in New Orleans. There is no greater laboratory of democracy, right now, anywhere else in the world, than in the city of New Orleans.”

New players and new partnerships
The storm created such havoc that many government and nonprofit social services providers were unable to function, and the traditional fragmented operating model did not suffice. Enlightened community leaders from across sectors created a new one. For example, James Kelly, CEO of Catholic Charities in New Orleans, told of how, before Katrina, a battered woman would have to go to various government agencies and nonprofits, one by one, in order to arrange services. Now Catholic Charities has assembled the relevant players under one roof—police, the district attorney’s office, and Catholic Charities’ attorneys, child-welfare and social workers. Before the storm, Kelly said, the word “collaboration” was used very loosely in describing how nonprofits interacted: It usually meant “keeping an eye on each other…. What’s happened since Katrina is non-profits, for-profits, public, private, we have true partnerships. Why? Because of the amount of work that has to get done. It’s like counting grains of sand on a beach.”

Rev. Raymond Jetson, former CEO of the Louisiana Family Recovery Corps, described how the storm’s disruption of “normal” social service channels sent people to their churches looking for help. The churches lacked the resources to help people directly, but a coalition of groups that included Catholic Charities equipped local congregations to be official designated access points for people seeking services. Jetson was shocked by the way red tape hamstrung rapid responses to urgent needs. For example, some federal money provided by Congress could only be given out if precise eligibility requirements were met. He was also frustrated to see social workers doing little more than head-patting—“assessing people, talking about their problems, identifying their needs, and then having the ability to do absolutely nothing about it.” For Family Recovery Corps., Jetson therefore adopted a model of direct funding. Interviewers, he said, “had real resources to provide in response to people’s needs…. [They] actually had the ability to write a check to a vendor to address the needs identified through the interview.”

In all, the expedient storm-tossed models turned out to be smarter—more efficient, transparent, and rational—than what they replaced.

Helping entrepreneurs cooperate
In 2002, Tim Williamson founded New Orleans-based Idea Village, a nonprofit that supports local innovators and entrepreneurs in the hope of helping talented, enterprising people succeed—and remain—in the city. In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, Williamson, who functions as a kind of human hub for local entrepreneurs, began a novel effort whose goal was to help small-business owners clean up, fix up, and reopen as quickly as possible.

As Williamson told it, soon after the storm he received $20,000 from a women’s group and was asked to award it to women entrepreneurs to help them get back on their feet, no strings
attached. He found ten women and gave them $2000 each, asking only that they use what they needed of the money and “put the rest of it back in the till.” He called it the Pay It Forward Fund. Soon, drawing on his network of 1100 entrepreneurs—and operating in a frictionless, no-red-tape style—he found himself matching the problems of one with the skills of another. The focus of entrepreneurship in this context was to begin rebuilding the city by solving one problem at a time. For instance, he gave funds to a small construction firm to buy a truck. Later, when a daycare facility needed to build a new fence, he asked the construction firm to help. A barbershop owner needed a plumber before he could reopen, and the husband of the daycare operator happened to be a plumber. In this way, said Williamson, “we started creating this network of self-sufficiency. And I think ... the way to build an entrepreneurial community is to really have entrepreneurs help each other.”

Williamson has also started a program called Idea Corps, which he describes as “the Peace Corps for entrepreneurship.” Through alliances with eight universities—starting with Tulane—he brings MBA students to New Orleans to conduct intensive one-week support sessions with local entrepreneurs. “[Their] minds are capital to these entrepreneurs.... And if you can do it for New Orleans, why can’t you do it for every other city in the country? Leverage our universities.” Williamson also made alliances with Google and with software maker Salesforce.com. “We think the real capital is in corporations and universities, that we can really leverage these networks to help entrepreneurs.”

**Private sector partnerships for the public agenda**

Louisiana also provided a new model for civic activism and engagement of the business sector in action for the common good. When Sean Reilly saw the momentum for change being generated in New Orleans, it made him want to tap into that grassroots energy and spread it across Louisiana. Reilly is COO of Lamar Advertising in Baton Rouge. He and a group of business and civic leaders from around the state formed Blueprint Louisiana to tackle some of the “seemingly intractable issues of race, poverty, healthcare, and education.”

Looking for operating models, they found a 20-year-old group in Oregon that was “driven by electoral cycles and legislative results.” The group had been successful there in increasing attention paid to serious issues and holding state legislators accountable for results. “If you can show [politicians] where you want them to go, they will go.” According to Reilly, Louisiana legislators are overwhelmed and don’t have sophisticated research staff. What they do have is “extreme parochialism, because it’s part of their job security. And they don’t think about those issues that drive the common good.”

So Blueprint Louisiana gathered current research and identified approaches and best practices used elsewhere in the country to address the kinds of fundamental problems Louisiana was facing. They used that to form a rough legislative agenda consisting of a dozen items. Then they took that agenda around the state, holding professionally facilitated public workshops where they asked citizens to listen, ask questions, discuss, and, finally, to vote on the one problem they thought was most pressing and the solutions seemed most promising. Through that voting process—which attracted about 2,000 people to the series of meetings—they narrowed the agenda of problems down to five. The top-ranked issue on the agenda was expanded pre-K education, considered a proven model to help lift children out of poverty.

The agenda was taken to legislators—along with a “contract” pledging to support the Blueprint program. Said Reilly, the evidence showed legislators that “we weren’t on a Don Quixote quest. People really cared about this…. And we could tell them, ‘If you endorse this in your campaign, we
will endorse you in your campaign.’ And now a supermajority of the legislature in both houses in the state of Louisiana have signed that contract with Blueprint. And our batting average for legislation that we have introduced subsequently is a thousand percent.”

Some lessons
What makes a community smart? The components might be an innovative, high-quality education system (such as New Orleans is in the process of building); enlightened civic leadership; an array of effective, well-funded and -coordinated social services; vibrant, diverse, democratic economic development and entrepreneurship supported by business, government, nonprofits, and local colleges and universities; an effective public infrastructure of communication and information technologies available to all levels of society. Listening to the voices of the community is critical, as many indicated throughout the Think Tank. For example, actor Brad Pitt visited New Orleans soon after Katrina and established a branch of his Make It Right Foundation on-site to build new “green” housing designed by leading architects. Tom Darden soon moved to the city to lead the program on-site and saw that without community voices in the design process, homes would go unspoken for; sometimes the poor maintain dignity by refusing gifts that do not reflect their values and needs.
Leadership for Change: The Challenge for Advanced Leaders

There are numerous opportunities for Advanced Leaders from every sector to fill gaps and create new coalitions that multiply the impact of smart solutions created by social entrepreneurs. Leadership for change involves touching on several levels echoed throughout the Think Tank:

- Public policy and resource allocation – government action to improve public systems and/or disseminate and scale the models;
- Social innovations – model operating programs that demonstrate impact;
- Mindsets and the will for change – mobilization, consciousness-raising, social movements.

Access to opportunity, as Think Tank discussions have indicated, is not simply a matter of paying off the poor. Issues of education, health, job creation, housing, access to capital, and community conditions intersect and must be addressed. Advanced Leaders use a set of four important clusters of skills.

1. Advanced Leaders start with a big vision but break it down into achievable steps, often beginning with a demonstration in the form of an operating program that is used to build a constituency for bigger change. Advanced Leaders identify untapped resources and use them as opportunities for innovation.

City Year began in 1988 with a very big vision: to establish national service in the U.S. Co-founders Michael Brown and Alan Khazei, saw the potential for national service to create a civilian “army” of young people to solve the nation’s problems while becoming engaged citizens. Khazei, former City Year CEO and founder of Be the Change, grew up believing that “every single person has something to give. Every single person has something inside of them that they can contribute. And you need to find that potential and embrace it and nourish it.” Brown encountered the concept for national service while an intern for a Congressman who wanted to set up a commission to study it. The idea was “that the nation should call on America’s youth to give a year or two of service, as a kind of civic rite of passage for all Americans. And out of that, so many things would happen… There’d be a multi-billion dollar service resource for the country. Young people would become experts on the needs of the nation. They’d be able to unite people of all backgrounds and help them complete the American Civil Rights Movement (which is very salient for our generation) by bringing everyone together to actually solve problems—to build a playground, to paint schools, to teach children.”

City Year began as a summer program in Boston with 50 young people, then became an academic-year program for full-time corps members, working primarily in schools and supported largely by the private sector with some local government contributions. The co-founders and team worked tirelessly to advance the big vision, and in 1992 found a champion in Bill Clinton, who was about to be elected President. Under Clinton the first legislation was passed, and City Year began to grow to other cities. By 2009 City Year operated in 20 U.S. cities or states as well as Johannesburg and London. In the U.S., legislation had been passed, with City Year’s active involvement, to establish the federally-supported national service program, AmeriCorps, with the 2008 Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act expanding it dramatically.

2. Advanced Leaders look at problems in multi-faceted ways, first surveying the landscape for what already exists and finding gaps to be filled. Advanced Leaders see the connections among issues and can create programs that themselves solve multiple problems simultaneously while building coalitions that create political will for change.
Earl Martin Phalen, then a Harvard Law School graduate, founded BELL (Building Educated Leaders for Life) to reach young school children. Phalen looked at the three basic strategies for education reform: people changes (hiring, training, and rewarding higher-quality teachers and principals); system changes (charter schools, smaller schools, increased school choice, curriculum reform); and time (longer school days, a longer school year, and longer class periods). He concluded that little was being done to leverage time as an instrument of reform. “Time has had 100 years of research behind it as the most powerful vehicle,” he said. Thus, BELL focused its efforts on turning the after-school hours into an opportunity for kids by offering mentoring, skill-building, teaching, diagnostic testing and skills assessments, and a strong element of parent involvement. Finding another large block of unutilized time, Phalen next launched Summer Advantage USA. The lack of summer learning by low-income students accounts for 66% of their performance gap versus middle-income students who typically have greater access to camps and other summer enrichment programs that mitigate the effects of lost learning. Summer Advantage aims to build a summer learning experience with curb appeal and no remedial stigma and to scale it through the use of a franchising model. An institute trains social entrepreneurs from around the country who want to start and lead a growth business, as he put it. An additional element is to mobilize the parents of BELL’s students as advocates for policy change. “Our niche is going to be tapping into the power of parents’ voice. I think it’s time for this country to feel the power of our parents.”

3. Advanced Leaders are advocates for ideas and mobilizers for change. Advanced Leaders create social movements as well as social innovations. They shape public opinion. They create or join coalitions of organizations with similar missions to unite for impact. They engage with the political process and work hard to overcome resistance to change.

Even though legislation has been passed, opposition to innovation might not diminish, and big national policies are subject to change as the political climate shifts, as indicated earlier. National service and the actions of the City Year co-founders and team provide another instructive example. In 2003, the U.S. Congress threatened to cut funding by 80 percent for the several thousand separate programs—including City Year—that comprised AmeriCorps. “None of the programs had done anything wrong,” Alan Khazei said. “It was all partisan politics and mismanagement in Washington.” What ensued showed the power of a connected community to organize, cooperate, and agitate to make something important happen—a large-scale activation of many different people’s justice nerves.

“We got together about a hundred of the leading service programs in the country and said, ‘We must work together to save AmeriCorps.’ And we launched this big grass-tops and grassroots effort…. It was all bipartisan. We went to Mitt Romney, who had been on the board of City Year and was then the governor of Massachusetts, and said, ‘Would you lead an effort [with Ed Rendell]? Will you organize the nation’s governors to write the president and congress?’ We got 44 governors in three weeks with their leadership. We went to [Boston Mayor Thomas] Menino, got 150 mayors. We got 100 editorials. We got 200 university presidents. We did this big grass-tops effort of getting leaders to

say [the AmeriCorps] program works; 250 business leaders took out a full-page ad in The New York Times saying, ‘We’ve invested a billion dollars of our own private capital as matching funds. Now, you need to keep doing your part, federal government.’”

That was only a beginning. Next was a citizens’ hearing, almost a citizens’ filibuster, in the U.S. Senate to get the attention of Congress. Senator Kennedy obtained the room. For more than 100 hours, more than 700 people from 47 states flew in to testify. “They were school teachers, they
were AmeriCorps alumni, Peace Corps alumni, mayors, governors, business leaders, faith-based leaders, community-based leaders, all telling us stories about the impact of AmeriCorps. And then, they went to see their elected representatives. And that turned it around. We got half the money back that year, [and] all the money back for the following year—plus a $100 million increase to grow the program by 50 percent.” The effort to save AmeriCorps led Khazei to the idea for Be the Change: an organization to re-imagine American democracy for the 21st century, by developing a new public-service policy agenda, mobilizing citizens behind it, and partnering with like-minded advocacy groups.

4. Advanced Leaders know how to understand constituencies and stakeholders and listen deeply to their perspectives, especially in a politicized context. Advanced Leaders have the skills to gain the support and contributions of stakeholders with resources to address a problem and create a team approach to problem-solving. They use “kaleidoscope thinking” to rearrange the patterns, like shaking a kaleidoscope, by bringing together resources from partners that are traditionally unconnected. They can think across conventions.

For their part, public sector leaders must certainly exercise the skills of Advanced Leaders to gain traction on messy, complex issues. Donna Shalala, President of the University of Miami and former U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services, who has served at the highest levels of government, provided instructive examples of ways to use public-private partnerships to move quickly without having to wait for legislation or wade through a long bureaucratic process. She expressed a preference for messy situations “in which I can figure out how to be a torpedo and cut through and to get measurable results on a very large scale. And to do that with partnerships with the non-profit world, with the private sector, with government all mixed together in a team approach to take giant steps in institutions.” For example, President Clinton, remembering a campaign promise, asked her as HHS Secretary whether she could raise the rate of U.S. childhood immunizations from only 47% to 90% of all children in four years. She said yes perhaps too quickly, because a panel of health experts she convened to tackle the problem flatly told her it couldn’t be done without a national public-health infrastructure and universal healthcare. Facing the humiliation of having to go back to Clinton with bad news, she had a flash of inspiration. “I reached into my purse and pulled out a postcard. ‘My golden retriever, Bucky,’” she recalled telling her panel of experts, “has just gotten a postcard from his vet. And the postcard says, ‘Dear, Bucky, time to come in for your next shot.” If we can get every dog and every cat and every cow and every sheep in this country immunized without universal healthcare and without a public health infrastructure, we can figure out how to get the kids in the country immunized.’” Using a creative public-private collaboration— involving such companies as Gerber’s and McDonald’s—to massively promote early-childhood immunization, the rate rose to 92%.

Collaborations point the way to change: the Advanced Leadership Opportunity. Shalala provided an appropriate comment to summarize one of the main messages of the Think Tank: “None of the giant leaps that I know of—whether it’s education reform, healthcare reform or welfare reform—can be done any longer without a public-private partnership and a very integrated system.
Think Tank Agenda

Thursday, April 30

3:00-3:20pm  Introduction to Advanced Leadership Initiative and Think Tank Goals


5:10-6:00pm  Discussion Groups moderated by: James Honan and Allen Grossman

6:15-7:30pm  “Poverty & Politics: Getting the Bottom on the Top Leadership Agenda”
Keynote speakers: Hon. Edward G. Rendell and Hon. Manuel A. Diaz

8:00-9:30pm  Dinner for participants and sponsors

Friday, May 1

8:15-10:30am  “Urban Problems: Clearing Barriers to Jobs & Self-Sufficiency, Ending Cycles of Poverty” – a Discussion in Two Parts.
Part I: “Solutions for Children & Families in Distress”
Panelists: Myron Orfield, Jackie Jenkins-Scott, Dr. Deborah Prothrow-Stith, Charles J. Ogletree, Jr.
Moderator: Robert Mnookin

Part II: “Beyond the Courts: Innovations in Crime Prevention, Prisoner Families and Re-entry”
Moderator: Peter Zimmerman

10:45a-12:00p  “Moving At-Risk Populations to Work, Organizing for Good Jobs, and the Green Collar Promise”
Panelists: Dorothy Stoneman, Nolan Rollins, Marshall Ganz, Jeffrey Stein
Moderator: Brian Price

12:00-1:00pm  Working Lunch in Discussion Groups

Speaker: Jeffrey Sachs  Commentary: Robert Kuttner

2:30-3:30pm  “Systemic Solutions and Models of Global Leadership”
Panelists: Rosabeth Moss Kanter, Hon. Rev. Charles Stith, Vivian Lowery Derryck, Iris Bohnet, Al Witten
Moderator: Forest Reinhardt

3:30-5:00pm  “Economic Empowerment and Job Creation: Micro-finance and Enterprise Solutions”
Panelists: Michael Chu, Nancy Barry, Gail Snowden, Andrea Titterington, Tim Ferguson, Tim Williamson,
Moderator: Peter Tufano

5:15-6:15pm  “Transforming Communities: Smarter Solutions”
Moderator: Charles J. Ogletree, Jr.

6:45-8:30pm  Dinner for participants and sponsors
Speaker: Hon. Mitch Landrieu

Saturday, May 2

8:15-9:50am  “From Disaster to Transformation: Hurricane Katrina and the Reinvention of Communities in Louisiana”

10:05-11:45am  “Filling Leadership Gaps, Taking Action: From One Solution to Scaling Impact”

11:45a-12:45p  Keynote Session: “The Politics of Positive Action”
Speaker: Hon. Donna Shalala

12:45-1:30pm  Working Lunch: Discussion groups will identify big ideas as takeaways to carry to national policymakers
2009 Advanced Leadership Fellows

Dr. Donald Arthur
Surgeon General, U. S. Navy

General Charles F. Bolden, Jr.
Brigadier General, US Marine Corps

Mr. Kenneth Colburn
Co-Founder, Highfields Capital Management LP,

Ms. Vivian Lowery Derryck
Assistant Administrator for Africa, U.S.A.I.D.

Mr. James Kaplan
Co-Founder and Executive Director, The Cromwell Center for Disabilities Awareness

Ms. Susan Leal
City Treasurer, City of San Francisco and San Francisco County

Ms. Shelly London
Vice President and Chief Communications Officer, Trane

Mr. Hans-Ulrich Maerki
Chairman and General Manager, IBM Europe/Middle East/Africa

Mr. John McCambridge
Co-Founder, Grippo and Elden, LLC

Dr. Pablo Pulido
Minister of Health and Social Welfare, Venezuela

Mr. Samir Toubassy
President, Olayan Development Corporation Limited

Mr. Robert Whelan
President, Whelan and Company, LLC

Ms. Hope Woodhouse
Chief Operating Officer, Bridgewater Associates
Advanced Leadership Initiative Faculty

CHAIR/DIRECTOR
Rosabeth Moss Kanter
Ernest L. Arbuckle Professor of Business Administration
Harvard Business School
Chair and Director, Interfaculty Initiative on Advanced Leadership

CO-CHAIRS
Barry Bloom
Distinguished University Service Professor Jack and Joan Jacobson Professor of Public Health
Harvard School of Public Health
Co-Chair, Interfaculty Initiative on Advanced Leadership

David Gergen
Director of the Center for Public Leadership
Public Service Professor
John F. Kennedy School of Government
Harvard University
Co-Chair, Interfaculty Initiative on Advanced Leadership

Rakesh Khurana
Professor of Business Administration
Harvard Business School
Co-Chair, Interfaculty Initiative on Advanced Leadership

Howard Koh
Harvey V. Fineberg Professor of the Practice of Public Health
Director, Center for Public Health Preparedness
Harvard School of Public Health
Co-Chair, Interfaculty Initiative on Advanced Leadership (2006-2009)

Charles J. Ogletree, Jr.
Jesse Climenko Professor of Law
Harvard Law School
Executive Director, Houston Institute for Race & Justice
Co-Chair, Interfaculty Initiative on Advanced Leadership

Fernando M. Reimers
Ford Foundation Professor of International Education
Director of Global Education and International Education Policy
Harvard Graduate School of Education
Co-Chair, Interfaculty Initiative on Advanced Leadership

Peter Brown Zimmerman
Senior Associate Dean for Strategic Program Development
John F. Kennedy School of Government
Harvard University
Co-Chair, Interfaculty Initiative on Advanced Leadership

EXECUTIVE BOARD
Donald Berwick
Professor, Department of Health Policy and Management
Harvard Medical School
President and CEO of the Institute for Healthcare Improvement

David Bloom
Clarence James Gamble Professor of Economics and Demography
Harvard School of Public Health

William W. George
Professor of Management Practice
Harvard Business School

Allen S. Grossman
Professor of Management Practice
Harvard Business School

James P. Honan
Senior Lecturer
Co-Chair, Institute for Educational Management
Harvard Graduate School of Education

Robert H. Mnookin
Samuel Williston Professor of Law
Director, Harvard Negotiation Research Project
Chair, Steering Committee Program on Negotiation
Harvard Law School

Nitin Nohria
Richard P. Chapman Professor of Business Administration
Harvard Business School

Forest Reinhardt
John D. Black Professor of Business Administration
Faculty Chair, European Research Initiative
Harvard Business School
Harvard University, Office of the President and Provost
Harvard Business School
Harvard Graduate School of Education
Harvard Kennedy School
Harvard Law School
Harvard School of Public Health

Advanced Leadership Sponsors
Cisco Systems
George Family Foundation
IBM
James Harman
Jennifer and Sean Reilly Family Fund
John Hancock Foundation
John S. and James L. Knight Foundation
Monitor Group
Paul and Phyllis Fireman Foundation
Procter & Gamble
Xerox

Rapporteurs: Rosabeth Moss Kanter and Lew McCreary
Harvard University, Office of the President and Provost
Harvard Business School
Harvard Graduate School of Education
Harvard Kennedy School
Harvard Law School
Harvard School of Public Health

Advanced Leadership Sponsors
Cisco Systems
George Family Foundation
IBM
James Harman
Jennifer and Sean Reilly Family Fund
John Hancock Foundation
John S. and James L. Knight Foundation
Monitor Group
Paul and Phyllis Fireman Foundation
Procter & Gamble
Xerox

Rapporteurs: Rosabeth Moss Kanter and Lew McCreary