

HOW WE MEASURE SUCCESS.

ANNUAL REPORT
September 2011 - August 2012



GROUNDSPARK
IGNITING **CHANGE** THROUGH FILM

We create visionary films and dynamic education campaigns that move individuals and communities to take action for a more just world.

We measure success by assessing how our films spark change.



HOW WE MEASURE SUCCESS

Igniting Change Through Film

Nodding in recognition of similar hopes and ideas.
Crying as fears buried deep within are articulated on the screen.
Laughing despite a difficult revelation because there is also a moment of levity.
Feeling inspired as a clear political analysis emerges.

These are the signs of a successful documentary FILM.

An animated discussion about the issues the film brings to light.
Surprise and dismay that these problems exist in our own backyard.
Celebrating as new champions step forward to volunteer.
A surge of fresh commitment and understanding in the community.

These are the outcomes of a successful film SCREENING.

Surveys are taken.
Adults are trained.
Youth connect with a curriculum.
Key decision makers engage at conferences.
Community activists and legal advocates communicate urgency.
Organizational partners join forces.

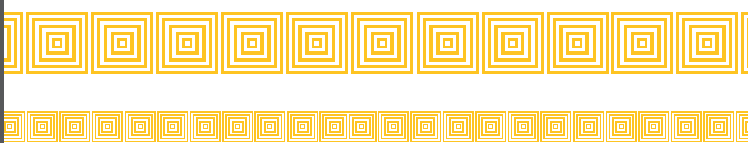
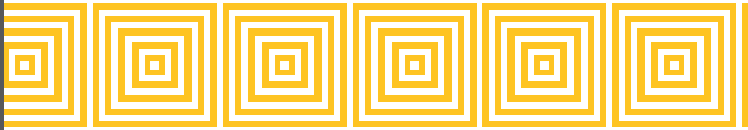
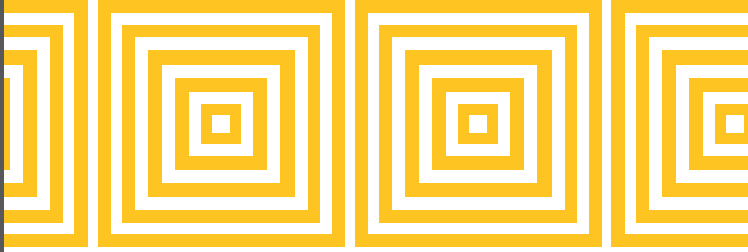
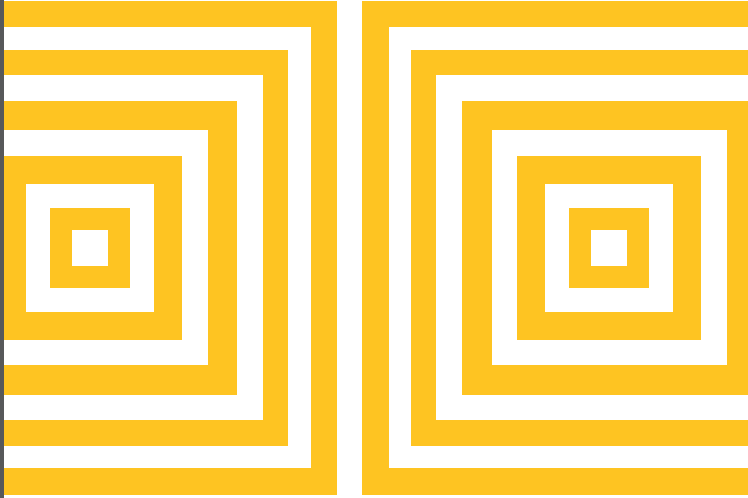
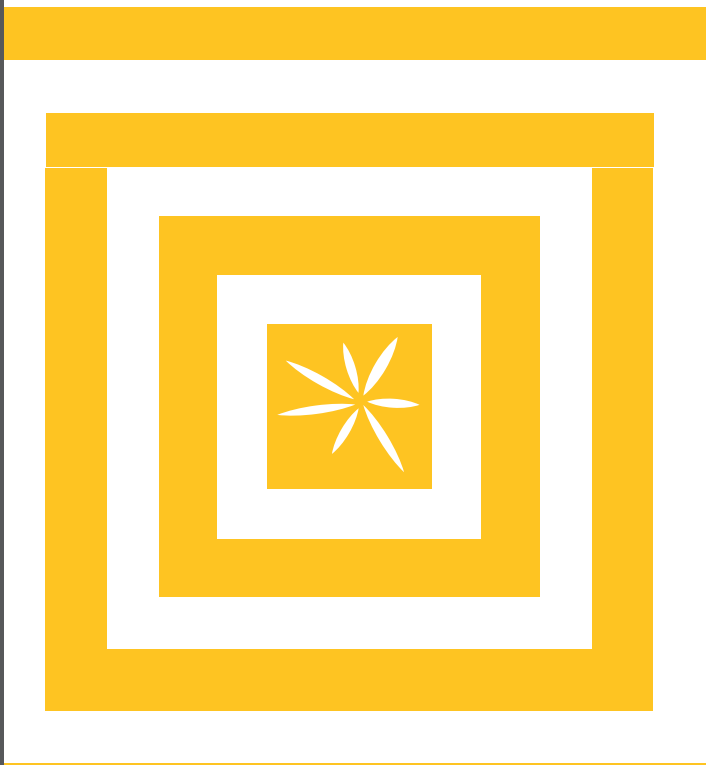
These are the indicators of a successful CAMPAIGN.

The media starts to cover the issues the film illuminates.
Politicians start addressing the same topics in their speeches.
More and more communities start to focus—and they often begin by showing a GroundSpark film.
The culture shifts.
We move toward a more just world.

These are the milestones of a successful MOVEMENT.

Having this film as a tool will help us galvanize a national movement because it enables us to tell a concrete story about children's savings accounts in a way that will stimulate similar efforts in cities and states across the nation and even around the world. I can't thank you enough.

—Bob Friedman, Founder and Board Chair, CFED



HOW WE MEASURE SUCCESS

When We Make Complex Progressive Concepts Accessible

It's not easy to prove that a corporation is poisoning its workers. Or that elementary school students can talk about gay issues. Or to demonstrate in a way that makes sense to both low-income families and bankers that community land trusts work. A film is a success when it can take a complex topic and break it down so diverse community members and decision makers can understand why they should care and what they can do.



Mia Vasquez-Fuentes is one of thousands of kindergarteners who automatically are given a college savings account in San Francisco.

This year, GroundSpark completed a new film about an innovative program that sets up college savings accounts for every single public school kindergartner in San Francisco. Ending the cycle of poverty is a core value for GroundSpark. Poverty, like homophobia, prevents people, especially young people, from being their full selves.

This new short film, ***A Foot in the Door*** (www.afootinthedoor.info), showcases GroundSpark's new partnership-based business model. We collaborated with Citizen Film on the production end and the Corporation for Enterprise Development for securing funding and analyzing the issues. The San Francisco Department of Education and the San Francisco Office of Financial Empowerment, and Citi Community Development partnered with us on this project.

FACT^{FAST}

Children with as little as \$500 in a college savings account are seven times more likely to finish college as those without. ***A Foot in the Door*** is making the case to policy makers, financial service providers, and educators that city and state governments should set up college savings accounts for every child.

HOW WE MEASURE SUCCESS

When Our Films Have Staying Power

Making a high quality film is an expensive endeavor.

And it can take several years to complete. When a film's impact dramatically outweighs the time and cost it takes to produce, we celebrate success.



The 2012 audience in Bologna, Italy lining up to go see *One Wedding and a Revolution* (2004) and *Choosing Children* (1984)

Very few films can claim to spark change year after year, much less for several decades. But GroundSpark films do just that.

The long “shelf life” of our films starts with a bold groundbreaking perspective on a critical issue. From there, we delicately balance exposing hard-hitting realities with inspirational acts of courage, humor, and wisdom.

The films usually debut in more progressive cities, and then move on to catalyze change in more conservative areas. This year, for example, one of our first films, *Choosing Children*—made in 1984—ignited a fascinating conversation in Bologna, Italy, where lesbians and gay men are just now grappling with the possibility of having children. The messages and insights in the film were just as relevant today in Bologna as they were in Boston, Massachusetts almost three decades ago.

FACT^{FAST} GroundSpark self-distributes its films through New Day Films, the premiere social issue film distribution co-op in the United States. For the past 16 years, as a group, GroundSpark films have been the most widely distributed in New Day. Your support enables us to promote our films and curricula far and wide.

“We’ve used *Straightlaced—How Gender’s Got Us All Tied Up* with dozens of community members, agency staff and advocates”, says social worker Mark Kroner, Director of the Lighthouse Training Institute in Cincinnati, Ohio, which provides services to homeless and runaway youth. “It is one of the most honest, well-produced and diverse looks at gender identity and the lives of youth whose identities do not fit established norms. Everyone who we’ve shown it too feels that they learned something new.”



HOW WE MEASURE SUCCESS

When We Can Keep Expanding the Circle

Hundreds of new schools, community organizations and universities turned to us this year, looking for ways to engage youth and adults about gender issues, bullying, and homophobia, and to support children from all kinds of families.



In our professional development trainings, we always focus on the ways bias issues intersect.

We are always on the lookout for new strategies to expand the circle. This year we:

- released a 160-page highly acclaimed curriculum guide to go along with *Straightlaced—How Gender’s Got Us All Tied Up*, to help ensure that students who see the film really get to engage with the gender, sexuality, race, and class issues in the film;
- piloted a new professional development program for educators and service providers wanting to use *Straightlaced*;
- traveled to conferences and screenings in Kentucky, Italy, Indiana, Oregon, Switzerland, and Colorado, meeting with middle school teachers, after school service providers, higher ed programs in teacher education, student leaders, and non-profit leaders;
- facilitated trainings and community meetings in Ithaca and Brooklyn, NY, San Leandro and Contra Costa County, CA, working with school staff, community librarians, parents, and health service providers.

FACT ^{FAST} The largest orders of our films this year came from the Wyoming Department of Education (100 DVDs) and a regional program in eastern Kentucky (350 DVDs). Your support helps us develop new educational resources, underwrites travel to conferences, and provides subsidized copies of DVDs and guides to schools.

“There is no way we will stop bullying unless we insist that the curricula in our schools address anti-gay stigma and the pressures to conform to gender norms. Until politicians of all political stripes stop vilifying the LGBT population. Until ‘all people of God’ stop telling children they are evil” —from our Huffington Post op ed, “Why We Can’t Just Say No To Bullying”



HOW WE MEASURE SUCCESS

When Others Step Up To Carry the Torch

One of the key measures of success for GroundSpark is when we see that others join us in offering leadership on the issues our films address. When we started the Respect for All Project back in 1996, we were one of a small number of organizations calling for safe, inclusive schools, and one of the only groups that had the courage to say that schools will never be safe unless LGBT issues are part of every curriculum.



Today, many of the stalwart organizations in the LGBTQ movement and the field of education have adopted the issue of safe school climates in their work. And many new local organizations have emerged. In 2006 we pushed hard to create the National Safe Schools Roundtable to bring these advocates together. Today the NSSR is over 50 organizations strong.

When we first released *Let's Get Real*, our documentary about name-calling, bullying, and bias, we were one of the first to advocate that bullying was a serious epidemic and should not be viewed as a normal rite of passage. Today, the federal government is finally addressing bullying. Hollywood is making films about bullying as well.

We consider it a success that so many more tools, films, and resources are available now about this issue. We are delighted that so many more leaders and groups are advocating for change. And, at the same time, we see scores of new communities turning to GroundSpark for help in addressing the thornier bias issues that fuel so much of the bullying problem.

FACT FAST Ten years ago, when we made *Let's Get Real* our call to action was “bullying should no longer be a normal rite of passage.” This year, the U.S. Secretary of Education said the same words at the Federal Anti-Bullying Summit. Your investment in GroundSpark and the messaging we have helped infuse in the safe schools movement are part of what made that happen.

HOW WE MEASURE SUCCESS

When Our Community Supports Us

GroundSpark is accountable to the community that it serves. And we measure our success in how well we serve that community by the financial support we receive from our donors and funders. We are enormously grateful to those who have helped us successfully weather many institutional and economic challenges.

D R U M R O L L F O R T H E H O N O R R O L L !

STANDING OVATION - \$50,000 - \$99,999

Gill Foundation

LEADING LIGHTS - \$25,000 - \$49,999

L.P. Brown Foundation - Special Fund

STARS - \$10,000 - \$24,999

The Bernard Fund

Mrs. Phyllis K. Friedman

Susan Lowenberg and Joyce Newstat Fund

Kim Lund of the Baptized Phoenix Donor Advised Fund of the
Women's Foundation of Minnesota

Amy Mandel and Katina Rodis Fund of the Morton and
Barbara Mandel Family Foundation

PRODUCER - \$5,000 - \$9,999

James C. Hormel and Michael P. Nguyen
Weston Milliken

DIRECTOR - \$2,500 - \$4,999

The Frank Foundation

Elizabeth Hirsch and Karen Pratt

ANIMATOR - \$1,200 - \$2,499

Miles S. Amen and Christopher A. Magan

Alvin Baum, L.C.S.W.

Janie and Donald Friend

Lesbian Equity Fund, advised by Kathy Levinson and Naomi Fine
M. Brinton Lykes and Catherine M. Mooney

Ann Marks

Nancy Meyer and Marc Weiss

Mark Reisbaum

EDITOR - \$600 - \$1,199

The Altman Donor-Advised Fund at Community Foundation of
Santa Cruz County

Adam Berman and Alex Scotta

The Eden Foundation, advised by Nancy Werthan

Barbara Frank and Veronica McCaffrey

Margo George and Catherine Karrass

Robin Kojima and Teresa Renaker

Leslie and David Lagerstrom

Live Oak Fund of Horizons Foundation

Linda and Doug Rittenhouse

O'Hanlan-Walker LGBT Equality Fund of Horizons Foundation

Janet Singer

Helene Sommer Wright

DESIGNER - \$350 - \$599

Judith Allen and Susan Seaburg

Anonymous

Martin S. Checov and Timothy J. Bause

Nanci Clarence and Lidia Szajko

Barbara M. Derbyshire

Margery Dimond

Sharon Dulberg and Ilana Drummond

Martha Ehrenfeld

Paul Feigenbaum and Judy Kemeny

Fleming Fund of Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation,
advised by Don and Diane Hewat

Florence Gelo and Susan Hoffman

David Gluck

Kate Goodale and Karen Fortoul

Pan Haskins

Susan Hopkins

Jacqueline Kurcz-Frett and David Frett

Richard Landers

Judy Lichtman/PINKTOP

Linda and Steve Luz-Alterman

Ragnar Naess and David Charles

Nancy Otto

Jerry Mehr Pavlon-Blum and Myron Pavlon-Blum

The Purple Lady/Barbara J. Meislin Fund, a donor advised fund
of the Jewish Community Endowment Fund

Amelie Ratliff

Gale Richards and Ruth Dawson

Ann D. Rubin

Kathleen Sharp

Bonnie Smolen

Steven Solow

Polly and Deborah Talen

Samuel and Julia Thoron

David Tuckerman

Stephen Veneziani and Steve Ege

Luke Yoder

COMPOSER - \$125 - \$349

Rosalie Alongi

Patricia Badger and Adrienne Paffrath

Lawrence Blum

Jim Campen and Phyllis Ewen

Victor Corder

Lizabeth Diamond

Estelle Disch

Karen Freedman and Roger Weisberg Philanthropic Fund
of the Jewish Communal Fund

Doree Friedman

Bonnie and Emma Genevich

Allan Gold and Alan Ferrara

Pat Goudvis

Gay and Dick Harter

Victor and Lorraine Honig

Katherine and John Kaufmann

Keith J. King

Paul Kivel and Mary Luckey

Kathy Klausner and Beni Strebel

Audrey Koh, M.D. and Gaeta Bell
Ewald E. Kundtz, Jr.
Joan Lefkowitz and Stacey Shuster
Jeff Mallory and Kevin C. Smith
Jan Marks and Holly Reed
Jo Ann Ogden
Daniel and Helen Quinn
Cynthia Robinson and Ellen Robinson
John Scherer
Jonny and Bradley Skinner
Calvin Vassallo Chan and Vic Aiuto
Barbara Wezelman
Jacqueline White and Marcus Waterbury
Barbra Wiener
Sheli and Henry Wortis

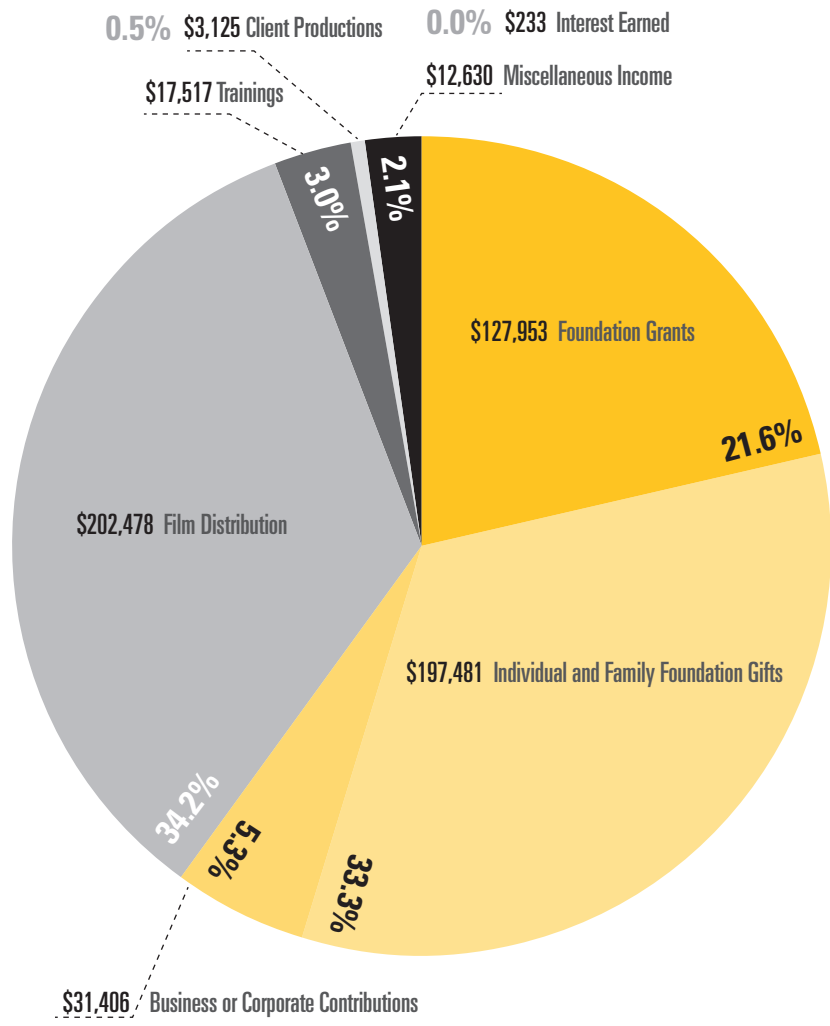
LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION - \$1 - \$124

Nancy Alach
Jane Ariel
Norma J. Bailey
Nancy Baker and Cathy Hauer
Valerie Barr and Susan Yohn
Brad Bennett and Barbara Schwartz
Ann Benson and Iris Harrell
Nancy Boutilier and Christa Champion
S.A. Cadwell
Amanda Carlin
William Cavellini and Kathleen Byrne
B.J. Charnak
Julia Cohen and Randi Solomon
Susan Colson and Maureen Anderson
Carol Cook and Susan Grieger
Nancy Cunningham
Laurel and Linda Davis-Delano
Dalton C. DeHart
Paul Denning
Doris and Donald DeZutter
Sally and Craig Falkenhagen
Julie Finn
Nancy Fishman and Nina Haft
Hannah Frisch
Dawn Gelle and Amy Gabriel
Dorothy Genevich
Amy Goldin and Nancy Lu
Laura Goldin
Eileen L. Goldman and Robert S. Gabriner
Annette Green
Peter Green
Arnold H. Grossman, PhD
Cicely Hand and David Wagoner
Sue Hansen
Charlotte Herdman and Debra Osborn
Susan Hirsch
Carol Hoffman Fund of the Jewish Communal Fund
Francie Hornstein
Cindy Horvath
Laura Ingram
Clara Jaeckel
Roslyn and J. Marcus Jones
Rhonda Kaufman and Steven Guttmann
David Lee Keiser
Arlene Ketchum
John Kinyon and Hung Tran
Max Kirkeberg
Drew and Susan Klausner
Hara Klein

Theodora Kramer
Gail Levine
Adam Levine
Susan Levinkind and Elana Dykewomon
Richard de Long Morley and Carl Leser
Brett Mangels
Patrick McCabe
Kam McCallum-Gesher and Gabriella Heinsheimer-Gesher
Sean McCormick and Kate Kabagambe
Peggy McIntosh
Beth Miller and Tom Hallock
Kendra Mon and Eugene Lane
Danette Mulrine and Arla Linton
Lorraine K. Obler and Margaret Feary
Victor Orange
Lynne Parenti and Tina Ramoy
Doug Paxton and Joe Vassallo
Neva Petrovich
Sandi Pollack
Claudia Polsky and Ted Mermin
Anne Prescott
Ora Prochovnick and Rena Frantz
Alan Quinonez
Helen Raizen and Kathy Mac Donald
Michael Rayment
Mairead Reid
Doris Reisig
Brian Roskam and Mike Werb
Anthony Ross
Margaret Rossoff
Kirby Sack and Pamela Merchant
Laurie Salzberg
Ellen Scanlan
Janice Schachter
Jeannie Segall
Steve Seidel and Adria Steinberg
Elizabeth Seja Min and Susan Freundlich
Rayona Sharpnack
Christy Shepard
Rebecca Silverstein
David Sloan-Rossiter and Susan Sloan-Rossiter
Margaret Sorrel
Dean Spencer and Katherine Seeger
Mae Stadler
Alice Stowell
Mary Strauss
Les and Marlon Taylor
Geoffrey Thomas
Jerry and Kathie Underdal
Dona J. Upson
Alfred T. Vernacchio Jr.
David and Ruth Waterbury
Marla Weiss and Rachel Marks
Deborah Westler
Susannah Wolf and Douglas Gauck
Cedric Yap and Edward G. Liebst, Jr.
Stan Yogi

MATCHING

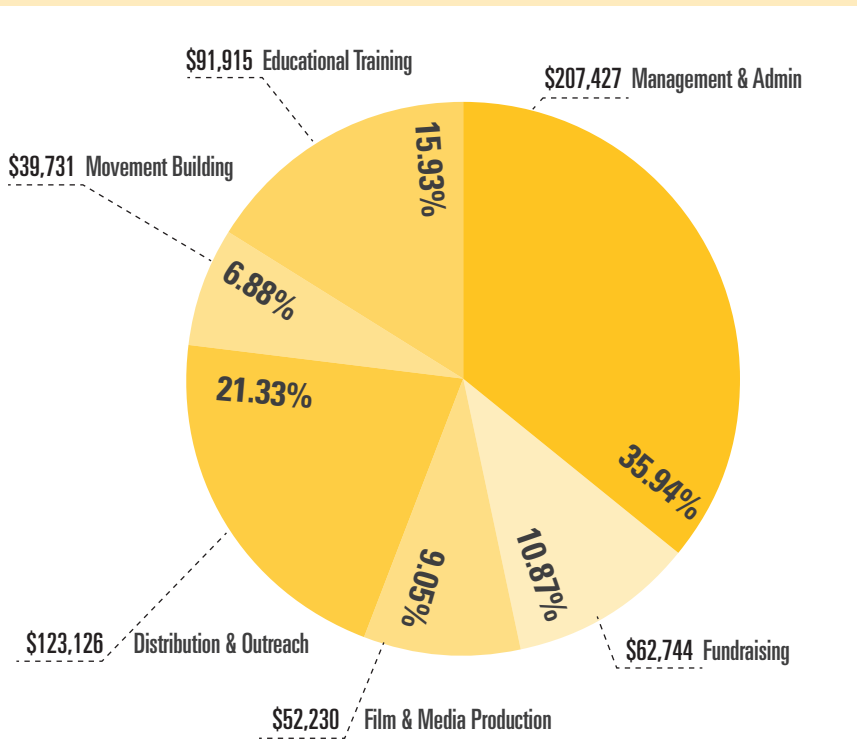
Covidian Employee Matching Gift Program
Motorola Mobility Foundation
Knight Foundation



	Earned Revenue	Contributed Revenue	Total
INCOME	\$235,983	\$356,840	\$592,823
TOTAL EARNED INCOME	\$235,983		\$235,983
TOTAL CONTRIBUTED REVENUE		\$356,840	\$356,840
TOTAL INCOME			\$592,823

FISCAL YEAR 2011

EXPENSES \$577,173 TOTAL EXPENSES



HOW WE MEASURE SUCCESS

When We Can Adapt and Change Ourselves

We are happy to report that this year, we eliminated the debt incurred during the financial downturn six months ahead of schedule! By shifting our business model more toward marketing and promoting our films, and changing how we staff our projects, we have dramatically increased the percentage of our expenses allocated toward program. We have become a more efficient and flexible organization while still maintaining our commitment to excellence and high impact.

“I am impressed with how GroundSpark has faced the funding challenges that have hit so many of the organizations we work with. You have really come up with creative solutions to your overhead, staffing, and program delivery. Congratulations.” —Jack Ziegler, Financial Consultant for the Movement Advancement Project.

In 2012 the numbers continued to improve. Our daily “burn rate” is down 66% from what it was in 2009 and the percentage of every dollar going to program has risen to 82% so far in 2012.

Net Assets, Beginning of Year	\$63,666
Net Assets, End of Year	\$79,316

What’s Behind the Numbers 2011 was a year of dramatic change for GroundSpark. After two challenging economic years, we decided to change our business model. We reduced our salaried staff to two people, moved our office to a shared workplace hub for entrepreneurial social ventures (resulting in a reduction of office space from 3000 square feet to 200), and shifted to working with high value professional contractors on specific projects. We have changed our funding base so that our primary revenue is derived from earned income and individual and family foundation gifts rather than from large institutional funders. And for GroundSpark, since our earned income comes from sales of our films, curriculum guides, and training service fees, every dollar of earned income means we are fulfilling our mission, and igniting change through film.

Financially, we are back on our feet. We have significantly improved our balance sheet: our debt has been paid; our liquidity ratio has improved from 0.8 in 2009 to a healthy 5.1 currently (meaning cash on hand is five times greater than our current liabilities); and because we’ve dramatically reduced our average daily cash expense from \$3,000 per day in 2009 to \$990 per day currently, our days of working capital (i.e., the number of days GroundSpark could fund its operations without a new infusion of funding) has increased from 28 days in 2009 to just under six months currently (176 days). Further, 82 cents of every dollar we now spend goes directly toward program services; a significant improvement from 2011 where, as a result of our restructuring, we were able to direct only 52% of our total expenditures to our programs.

HOW WE MEASURE SUCCESS

When We Have a Great Team

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Joan Lefkowitz	Co-Chair
Lidia Szjako	Co-Chair
Mary Morgan	
Susan Lowenberg	

STAFF

Debra Chasnoff	President and Senior Producer
Brandy Sacks	Operations Coordinator

PROJECT CONSULTANTS

Justin Allen	Website Managing
Sue Chen	Producing
Helen S. Cohen	Respect for All Project Co-Founder
Adore Davidson Rodriguez	Administration
David Gluck	Financial Management
David Hauer	Database
Stan Jones	Website Enhancement
Judy Lichtman (PinkTop)	Graphic Design
Nancy Otto	Fundraising
Amro Radwan	Technology Support
Amy Scharf	Education Programming
Ryan Schwartz	School District Support – Rapid Response Network
Brittney Shepherd	Producing and Marketing
Kate Stilley Steiner (Citizen Film)	Producing and Editing

Production and Post-Production Crew for ***A Foot in the Door***
Mike Chen, Gary Coates, Sophie Constantinou,
Lauretta Molitor, Phil Perkins

Production Crew for **Vote for Equality** television spots
Marsha Kahm, Claudia Katayanagi

Celebrating the Life of Del Martin DVD
Rhonda Collins, ZAP Productions

We'd also like to thank Vanessa Casey, Noah Chasnoff, Barry Chersky, Cristy Chung, Dora Dome, Oscar Klausner, Erin Lee, Eva Moss, and Karrie Myers Taylor for their staffing and volunteer contributions over the last year.



GROUNDSPARK

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