

“For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” – JEREMIAH 29:11

SC MINISTRY  
FOUNDATION

# COMPELLING WITNESS

SUMMER 2008

## SC Ministry Foundation Mission

SC Ministry Foundation is a public grant-making organization. The Foundation promotes the mission and ministry of the Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati.



*Sisters of Charity*  
of Cincinnati

## Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati Mission

Urged by the charity of Christ, we Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati, strive to give compelling witness to Christ's active presence by doing justice, expressed as loving trust shaping all our relationships, and as sharing our individual and Congregational resources for the liberation of the oppressed.

## Guiding the Future

Strategic planning is one of a board's primary responsibilities and requires a strong commitment from board members. It is also what authors Amy McClellan and John A. Yankey call “the perfect time for board members to consider their dreams and visions for an organization.”\*

Eileen Cooper Reed, SC Ministry Foundation board chair, agrees. Reed explains it more literally, “Strategic planning is assessing where you are now, determining and developing a vision for where you want to be, and the strategic plan is how you get there.”

Understanding an organization's mission and vision statements is essential in the strategic planning process. BoardSource Governance Consultant Ann Cohen explains that oftentimes vision and mission are used interchangeably.

While both are starting points for planning, she explains, each plays a different role. Cohen provides the following definitions of mission and vision to illustrate her point:

**VISION:** A picture or dream of a desired future representing the ultimate desired objective of the organization. It asks and answers: What do you aspire to? Setting a vision should be a priority for any organization.

“Your vision ought to be a stretch; it ought to push you and move your organization to change the things you see need to be changed.”

– Eileen Cooper Reed  
SC Ministry Foundation board chair



Tim Moller and S. Georgia Kitt, SC review the Foundation's Vision, Purpose and Guiding Principles as part of the strategic planning process.

**MISSION:** An organization's fundamental purpose and reason to exist. It describes the needs the organization was created to meet and answers the basic question: What guides the organization from day to day? There should be no ambiguity about the mission as you implement your strategic plan. †

\* *The Nonprofit Board's Role in Planning and Evaluation* by John A. Yankey, PhD and Amy McClellan, MNO. BoardSource, 2003.

† Definitions of vision, mission and strategies are taken from the “Ask Our Consultants” article by Ann Cohen in the May/June 2008 edition of *Board Member*®, a publication of BoardSource.

# Our New Strategic Plan

SC Ministry Foundation’s strategic planning process was woven into the past year, with the strategic planning committee meeting throughout that time to review the previous strategic plan, generate feedback from Foundation stakeholders and establish the new direction.

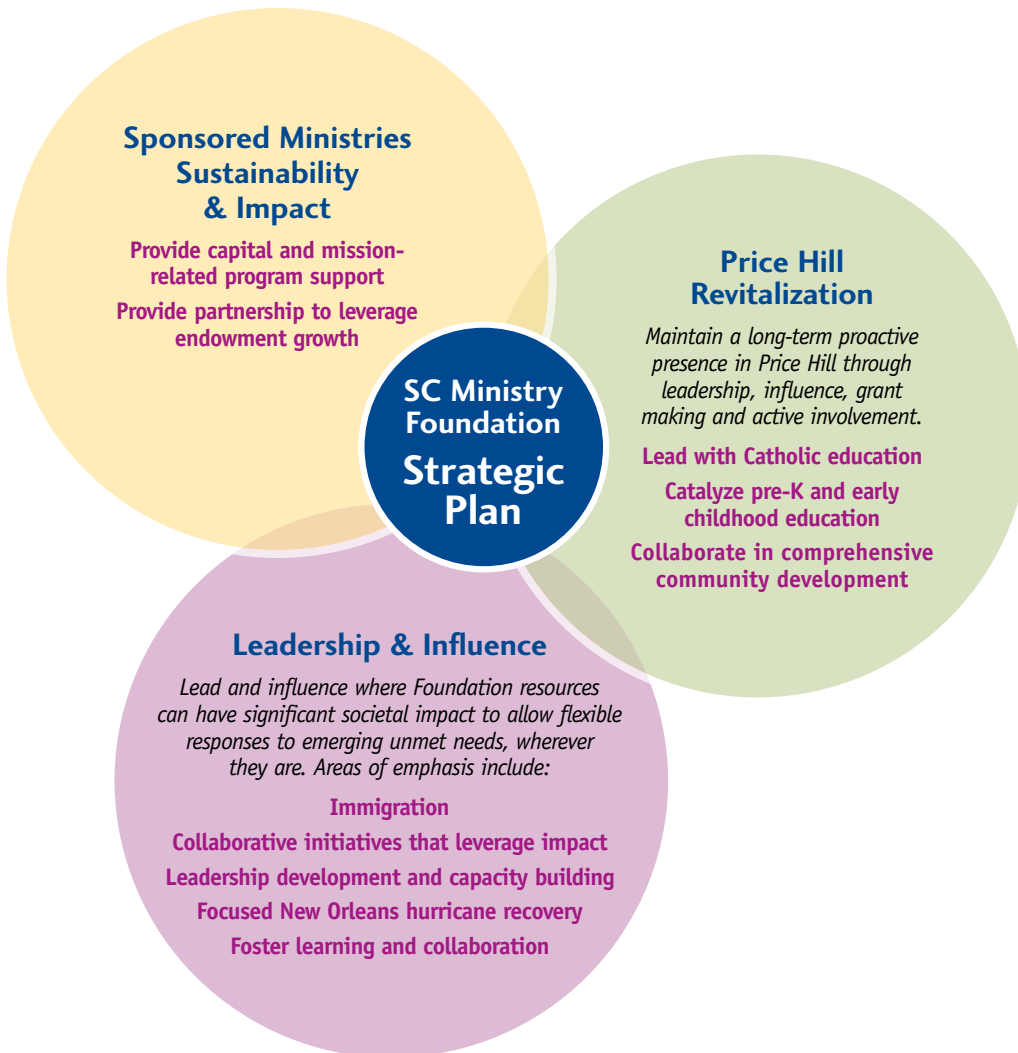
The plan was presented to the board at its June meeting and was met with enthusiasm from board members. “I’m impressed with the ideas and effort that will be put into collaboration in the upcoming years,” says board member Charles Whitehead.

Board chair Eileen Cooper Reed added that collaboration is a good focus for the Foundation. “People talk about collaboration, but we are *doing* it. Therein lies its purpose,” she explains.

The plan continues some focus areas of the previous plan, integrates important feedback from stakeholders and establishes some new focus areas:



Board chair Eileen Cooper Reed and board members S. Fran Trampiets, SC, Tim Moller, S. Katie Hoelscher, SC, and Karen Bennett Hoeb at the June board meeting.



## Vision, Purpose,

### VISION STATEMENT

Knowing we are reliant and dependent on God and respecting the legacy given to us by all Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati, SC Ministry Foundation provides leadership and influence regionally and nationally in changing structures and removing barriers that divide and marginalize people.

The Foundation is a force for effective innovation by supporting creative responses to unmet needs and new opportunities. As catalyst for collaboration, the Foundation strengthens networks among organizations with a mission similar to its own.

Board member Charles Whitehead is impressed with the Foundation's commitment to collaboration in the new strategic plan.



### A FUTURE NOT OUR OWN

Tim Moller, board member and chair of the strategic planning committee, concedes that the true “art” of strategic planning is sifting down data and ideas into a plan that is “doable and will enlist people’s passion.”

Eileen Cooper Reed agrees. “We take great care in identifying the strategic things we can work on,” she says.

In addition, Reed thinks that having roots in the Sisters of Charity sets the Foundation apart when it comes to strategic planning. “Our roots really enable us to be more visionary,” she explains, “because we are grounded in spiritual values and charity principles.”

Moller concurs and believes there is a strong emphasis on vision at the Foundation. “We try to think years ahead,” he says, “about a future that is not our own.”

# The Grantee Perception Report®

As part of the strategic planning process, SC Ministry Foundation engaged The Center for Effective Philanthropy, a Cambridge, Mass. based nonprofit, to conduct a survey of grantee perceptions of the Foundation.

The survey was completed by 227 Foundation grantees, an 81 percent response rate, and compiled by the Center into the Grantee Perception Report® (GPR). The Foundation rated higher than 90 percent of surveyed foundations in 9 areas, including clarity of communications of goals and strategies and quality of interactions.

More than 150 foundations have used the GPR to help assess performance on a variety of dimensions from application and reporting processes to perceived impact of funding specific issues.

The Center compared the Foundation’s results to those of the other foundations, representing 40,000 grantees, and to a cohort. In addition, this year’s GPR was compared to 2003’s results, providing insight on changes in our grantees’ perceptions since 4 years ago.

SC Ministry Foundation thanks our grantees for valuable insights that helped the strategic planning process and will continue to help inform operational improvements.

## and Guiding Principles

### PURPOSE

Through grants, capacity building and collaboration, SC Ministry Foundation:

- Provides financial support to those organizations identified with the **Sisters of Charity** in need of support for viability and growth
- Furthers **social justice** by addressing root causes of poverty, racism and oppression
- Supports services and programs that will positively impact the **poor and underserved**
- Promotes collaborative initiatives for the building up of **healthy communities**

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

We nurture the Sisters of Charity commitment to offer a caring response to those in need through education, health and social services.

We attempt to heal those areas of our society where justice has broken down and we seek opportunities to promote healthy cultural, social and ethnic diversity.

We take steps in faith to bridge gaps in human services, to meet unmet needs and to risk a caring response to challenging circumstances, aware that our endeavors may not always prove successful.

We partner with grantees and collaborate with like-minded foundations, leveraging funding where appropriate.

We act as responsible stewards of our resources, making grants in a strategic and timely manner and monitoring their disbursements and outcomes.

The Foundation wishes a fond farewell to **JANET WASSER**, who is retiring after nearly 18 years of service to the Sisters of Charity. Janet, a founding staff member of SC Ministry Foundation, will be greatly missed. We wish her the best the future can bring!



In February, the Foundation sponsored an **IMMIGRATION AFFINITY MEETING** for immigration leaders from around the country. The two-day event was held in northern Kentucky and was attended by over 60 grantees and Sisters of Charity. To read about the event and featured speakers and topics, go to our website at [www.scmistryfdn.org](http://www.scmistryfdn.org) and read the full article in the News section.



Welcome to our new executive assistant, **DONNA JO "DJ" SMILEY**, who joined us in January. DJ comes to the Foundation following a long career with Catholic Health Initiatives and Sisters of Charity Health Care Systems where she provided support to

executives in various departments. We are excited to have DJ with us and look forward to working together!

 Calendar Notes

**July 7, 2008**

Begin accepting phone calls for possible grant pre-applications for January 2009 funding

**August 15, 2008**

4:00 pm EDT  
Deadline for receipt of grant pre-applications for January 2009 funding

**August 20, 2008**

3:00 – 4:30 pm EDT  
Grant application conference call for pre-applicants who received grant applications

**September 19, 2008**

4:00 pm EDT  
Deadline for receipt of grant applications for January 2009 funding

**January 5, 2009**

Begin accepting phone calls for possible grant pre-applications for July 2009 funding

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