



CLASP

policy solutions that work for low-income people

2010 ANNUAL REPORT



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FROM THE LEADERSHIP

The year 2010 was one of celebration of our 40-year history and of challenges for our policy work to improve the lives of low-income people. We celebrated our anniversary with an event attended by 350 of our supporters, and we also launched a policy series that explores big picture policy questions on how to improve outcomes for low-income people.

Our policy work in 2010 was influenced by the economic struggles of ordinary Americans and the polarized policy environment at the federal level. Our advocacy included work to move Congress to continue funding the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Emergency Fund, created in 2009 as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The fund gave states more money to meet increased need driven by the recession. It included a subsidized jobs program that provided employment to 260,000 people. Our advocacy helped secure favorable news coverage of the TANF Emergency Fund, particularly the subsidized jobs program. In spite of favorable public opinion, Congress did not authorize continuing the program. Still, more are now aware that TANF is a broad program that, yes, provides cash assistance and alleviates hardship, but also can provide job training and other opportunities.

Throughout 2010, lawmakers continually had to renew extended unemployment benefits. Our advocacy focused on the necessity of this lifeline for families as well as the need for a longer-term strategy to address the nation’s jobs/skills mismatch. Many jobs that disappeared with the economic downturn aren’t coming back, and it’s essential for the nation’s long-term economic competitiveness that more workers, especially low-skill workers, acquire the education and job training necessary to access jobs of the future.

In September, we launched our Center for Postsecondary and Economic Success, a venture that seeks to increase the number of adults with postsecondary credentials by promoting policies that

ensure low-income people not only have access to postsecondary opportunities but also can overcome some of the barriers that prevent them from persisting and completing their credentials.

CLASP is also proud to have secured an important investment for young children when a little-known provision was included in the historic health care reform law signed by President Obama in March 2010. The provision ensures \$1.5 billion in mandatory funding over five years for evidence-based, high-quality early childhood home visitation services. Through research, advocacy and coalition building, CLASP was a driving force in creating momentum and support for this investment that ensures more children have the opportunity to grow up healthy, safe and ready to learn.

Last year we also sharpened our disconnected youth and black men and boys work. We produced and released a well-received video, *In Their Own Words*, which vividly described the experiences of young men of color who had dropped out or were expelled from school and how disconnected-youth focused programs help put them on a path to education and work. We also worked with the 2025 Campaign for Black Men and Boys to produce a report that makes concrete policy recommendations for improving outcomes for young men.

Overall 2010 was challenging and rewarding. We are grateful to have celebrated 40 years of successful advocacy, and we remain committed to ensuring low-income people continue to be part of the political discourse and have access to opportunity to fulfill their potential.

Sincerely,



Joseph Onek
BOARD CHAIR



Alan W. Houseman
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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STRENGTHENING CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

FAMILIES ARE THE BEDROCK OF COMMUNITIES BUT FAR TOO MANY LIVE IN POVERTY AND LACK THE SUPPORTS THEY NEED TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE ECONOMY AND ENSURE THEIR CHILDREN GROW UP HEALTHY, SECURE AND PREPARED TO SUCCEED. CLASP ADVOCATES FOR INVESTMENT IN PROGRAMS THAT HELP CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES THRIVE. IN 2010, CLASP:



- Coordinated coalition efforts that secured \$1.5 billion in mandatory funding for evidence-based, high-quality early childhood home visitation services included in the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010.
- Provided extensive technical assistance to states to encourage them to use funds available through the TANF Emergency Contingency Fund to operate subsidized employment programs and used data on the number of jobs created (more than 260,000) to educate federal policymakers about the program's value.
- Analyzed federal data on TANF spending by states and published the information in state-by-state charts for use by other advocates and state and local administrators.
- Helped federal legislators understand the need for increased investment in state child care assistance programs and Head Start through monthly analyses of state expenditures of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds.
- Assisted federal, state and local policymakers to create a system of high quality care for low-income children, including helping congressional staff understand staff qualifications and salaries in Head Start and helping state advocates and policymakers understand the Head Start data for their states by answering specific questions about coordination and collaboration.
- Provided extensive input on House and Senate proposals for an Early Learning Challenge Fund to ensure that low-income children, especially infants and toddlers, were included.
- Launched “Disconnected No More”, a series of discussions that shares how advocates, administrators, youth practitioners, and other community leaders can partner to create pathways to economic success for young men of color.
- Authored “Building Pathways to Postsecondary Success for Low- income Young Men of Color”, a chapter in the 2010 book *Changing Places: How Communities Will Improve the Health of Boys of Color*, produced by the University of California at Berkeley's Warren Center.
- Provided intensive technical assistance to Washington agencies and state advocates to help draft state Birth to Three Plan for submission to the governor.
- Co-led the Partnership to Protect Children and Strengthen Families, a 30-organization coalition developing a set of policy recommendations on how to better align federal child welfare financing to support services needed to prevent child abuse and neglect.
- Provided technical assistance to federal, state and local policy makers and advocates on the implementation of the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act.
- Provided information to federal policy makers on how to use Workforce Investment Act (WIA) and Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) reauthorization to increase focus on dropout recovery and re-engagement.

IMPROVING CHILD WELL-BEING THROUGH HOME VISITING FUNDING IN HEALTH CARE REFORM FOR HOME VISITING AIDS EFFORTS TO REACH CHILDREN EARLY, IMPROVE WELL-BEING AND OUTCOMES

For several years, CLASP led an effort to demonstrate to federal policymakers the importance of home visiting and to create a new source of funding for it in states. This work was rewarded when President Obama signed historic legislation to allow millions more access to quality, affordable health care on March 23, 2010. Among its many important provisions, the *Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act* included \$1.5 billion in mandatory funding over five years for evidence-based, high-quality early childhood home visitation services through the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program.

Home visiting is a strategy that knits together programs and services to reach children early and improve overall child well-being and outcomes. Well-trained staff such as nurses, social workers or child development specialists cultivate relationships with pregnant women and new parents to provide a comprehensive set of supports to vulnerable families, such as parent education and child health screenings. Equally important, the program serves as a critical link between families and other community services.

CLASP was a driving force in pulling together stakeholders to speak in one voice for home visiting and organizing research to demonstrate its effectiveness in promoting healthy outcomes for children and families. CLASP staff partnered with national, state and local advocates to create



consensus across the country and on Capitol Hill. Our staff worked hard to ensure that Congress and staff understood home visiting is not simply a “program” or a “service” — or a set of programs or services “delivered to families,” but is an approach that meets families where they are, helps them identify their own strengths and needs, and then works with them to help their children grow and thrive.

The dedicated funding for the Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting program was a critical step in giving families the tools they need to access resources

and provide the building blocks for healthy child development. More health check-ups mean less time at home and more time in the classroom. Parenting education gives new parents the tools to positively impact their child's development during the earliest and most formative years. It also means parents better understand their children's needs and children are less likely to suffer abuse or neglect. The connection to other services and supports in the community helps parents succeed in meeting their children's needs and also reduces the social isolation that many struggling families face.

The passage of the Affordable Care Act was an important step in CLASP's work to expand home visiting in the states — but by no means the end. As soon as the legislation was signed, CLASP began helping states understand the new program's requirements and worked with federal policymakers to design guidance and regulations. In addition, CLASP continued to advocate for the implementation of the home visiting program at the state level as an important tool to build a continuum of services for children and families that starts at birth and moves through early childhood and into school. Through presentations, publications and communications with federal and state policymakers, we have worked to ensure that the new program is not another silo in states, but is an incredible opportunity to create coordinated systems to serve at-risk children and families.

IN THEIR OWN WORDS

A COMPELLING CLASP-PRODUCED VIDEO SHOWS WHY THE NATION MUST INVEST RESOURCES IN DISCONNECTED YOUTH TO ALLOW THEM TO OVERCOME BARRIERS AND FULFILL THEIR POTENTIAL

Angel Armando Perez of Hartford, Conn., says he began skipping school because he could earn up to \$300 per week bagging groceries, a sum too small for a family to thrive on, but a relatively large amount to a young person living in a low-income household with finite resources.

To stereotype Perez or make assumptions about his life may be expedient, but it wouldn't accurately represent who he is and what he wants for his life. In the fall, CLASP and Forward Ever Media produced the short documentary film *In Their Own Words*, which describes the experiences of four young men of color who grew up in distressed communities and faced obstacles to completing high school. The film not only tells their moving stories, it breaks down pernicious stereotypes about why so many young men of color fail to complete high school.

The film also encapsulates why one of CLASP's key focus areas is youth policy. It's not enough to solely have policies in place that prevent young people from dropping out of

high school. Until the high school dropout rate is zero, we also must focus on what to do with youth who have already left school. This is why CLASP works on strategies and effective policies at the federal, state and community levels to ensure disconnected youth have access to opportunities to help them successfully transition to productive adulthood.

In Their Own Words was screened in communities, viewed myriad times on the CLASP website, presented at several conferences, and accepted at the end of 2010 into the San Diego Black Film Festival for screening in early 2011. Perez and the other young men profiled in the video have compelling stories to tell. They all had barriers to completing high school or, at one point, dropped out. But with the help of local Youth Opportunity programs, each earned a high school diploma or GED and received employment and postsecondary training.

The Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration funded Youth



“THE NATION’S GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS WILL BE TIED INEXTRICABLY TO THE CALIBER OF YOUNG WORKERS, INCLUDING THOSE OUTSIDE THE MAINSTREAM.”

— LINDA HARRIS, CLASP DIRECTOR OF YOUTH POLICY, IN CITY LIMITS MAGAZINE

Opportunity from 2000 to 2005. The program aimed to transform distressed neighborhoods through grants to organizations to provide employment, training, educational, and supportive services to youth ages 14 to 21. An evaluation of the program released in late 2008 showed that when such programs receive adequate resources to build community capacity to serve youth, labor force participation and educational outcomes improve.

Two other young men featured in the video, Antonio Howe, 22, and Donnell Chapman, 19, completed their GEDs. They are alumni of YO! Baltimore and in 2010 were enrolled in Baltimore City Community College. Howe, when speaking of his experience, talks about his relationship with his case manager in the Youth Opportunity program as, “Something I never had before.”

Angel Armando Perez, now 24, finished school and is a youth development specialist at Our Piece of the Pie, the same program that provided him with the support he needed to persist and complete high school. The final young man featured in the video, Kendrick Campbell, now 30, is a married father of three, a licensed bus driver and also owns a barbershop. He received training for this employment through Phoenix Youth & Family Services, another Youth Opportunity program.

Although there is no longer federal money for these programs, some communities continue to fund them, and CLASP continues to advocate for federal, state and local strategies to ensure youth such as those profiled in *In Their Own Words*, have opportunities to succeed.



THE 2025 VISION FOR BLACK MEN AND BOYS

To call the statistics that define the social and economic well-being of black men and boys disturbing would be an understatement. There are enormous disparities in outcomes for blacks in general in all major areas of life – educational attainment, employment, justice, health and housing. Overall, this leads to black families and communities that are less sound.

CLASP is part of a national campaign to fundamentally change the status quo. The 2025 Campaign for Black Men and Boys seeks to drastically alter the landscape for black boys born in 2007 by the time they legally reach adulthood in 2025. CLASP in 2010 wrote the campaign's guiding principles, *We Dream a World*, which outlines a strategic and ambitious policy agenda for improving outcomes for black men and boys in the areas of health, education, employment, fatherhood and families, and justice. It calls for a cooperative effort among federal, state and local policymakers, community organizations, advocates and systems that provide direct services. The campaign is consistent with CLASP's long-standing work to improve outcomes for disconnected youth.

PATHWAYS TO GOOD JOBS

CLASP WORKS TO IMPROVE THE LABOR MARKET SUCCESS OF LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUALS AND THEIR FAMILIES IN WAYS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO SOCIAL EQUITY, ECONOMIC GROWTH AND FAMILY WELL-BEING. WE WORK TO IMPROVE JOB QUALITY AND BUILD PATHWAYS THAT CONNECT LOW-INCOME INDIVIDUALS – INCLUDING HIGH-SCHOOL DROPOUTS, EX-OFFENDERS, WELFARE RECIPIENTS, LOW-SKILLED IMMIGRANTS, AND OTHER VULNERABLE YOUTH AND ADULTS – TO THE EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND SUPPORTS THEY NEED TO ADVANCE. IN 2010, CLASP:



- Launched the *Center for Postsecondary and Economic Success* to promote better policies, more investment, and increased political will to address the large number of low-income people lacking the education and credentials needed to succeed in the job market.
- Released *Funding Career Pathways and Career Pathway Bridges: A Federal Policy Toolkit for States*, a resource designed to help interagency state teams “braid” federal resources to design and develop career pathways and bridges for adults and out-of-school youth.
- Successfully advocated for line-item funding for Transitional Jobs to be included in the Department of Labor budget for the first time.
- Successfully advocated with the Department of Education to release guidance on how states can use funding provided under the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act to support integrated education and training models that help students more quickly complete educational programs and earn a postsecondary certificate.
- Through our advocacy for the proposed Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act, influenced the provision of a \$2 billion discretionary grant program within the Trade Adjustment Assistance Act to support systemic reforms in community colleges that was enacted as part of the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010.
- Improved Workforce Investment Act programs for low-income youth and adults through extensive technical assistance on use of increased funding for quality training and supports under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.
- Engaged Department of Education officials to expand focus on high-risk high school aged youth in the Investment in Innovations (I3) and Race to the Top funds. Final guidance included CLASP recommendations, including using funds to create multiple pathways, creating programs of dual enrollment, and expanding definition of high risk students.
- Led the Joyce Foundation’s Shifting Gears initiative that helped five Midwestern states strengthen connections between adult education, workforce development and postsecondary education programs for low-income working adults.
- Educated policymakers and advocates on the importance of refundable tax credits such as the Earned Income Tax Credit for childless workers, the higher education tax credit and the child tax credit, and emphasized the urgency of including them as part of any extension of the “middle class” tax cuts.
- Aided New Hampshire and Colorado in adopting work-sharing programs, which provide partial unemployment insurance benefits to workers whose hours have been reduced as a way for employers to avoid layoffs.
- Ensured unemployed workers have the safety net to meet their basic needs by successfully advocating for continuation of federal extended benefits under unemployment insurance, including a final 13-month extension included in the tax bill passed in December.
- Expanded business support for paid sick days policies by partnering with local and state campaigns and launching a one-stop micro site for the latest developments around businesses and paid sick days.

CREATING SUBSIDIZED JOB OPPORTUNITIES FOR LOW-INCOME WORKERS

THE TANF EMERGENCY FUND HELPED BUSINESSES AND INDIVIDUALS BY PROVIDING 260,000 SUBSIDIZED JOBS FOR LOW-INCOME WORKERS

The San Francisco Chronicle in June told the story of a single mother who lost her job in January 2009, sending her on a downward financial spiral and causing her to eventually lose her apartment. With no job or other resources, she and her son moved into a one-bedroom apartment with a close relative. In the meantime, she completed job training for medical billing. When she couldn’t find employment in that field, she turned to California’s Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program for help and was able to secure a subsidized job. She was just one of more than 260,000 low-income individuals who received subsidized jobs through the TANF Emergency Fund created by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

The significance of this story and countless others like it that appeared in news outlets across the country during 2010 is that it helped shift public discourse around TANF and created broader understanding that the program not only provides cash assistance to alleviate hardship, but it also can connect people to the resources and tools they need to secure the education, training and jobs they prefer and want.



CLASP provided information to multiple news reporters writing about the Emergency Fund. In addition, it provided intensive technical assistance to states and localities on use of the funds, and collected and disseminated information on how states and individuals benefited from the Emergency Fund. Besides subsidized jobs, the program provided thousands of low-income families with short-term benefits such as assistance for rent, utility bills and other emergency services, and it averted cuts to cash assistance that otherwise would have occurred

because of drastic declines in state revenues. Due to its effectiveness, the TANF Emergency Fund was widely supported by governors and mayors in both parties.

In spite of the TANF Emergency Fund’s success and CLASP’s aggressive advocacy, the 111th Congress did not renew the program. But CLASP will build on the experiences and lessons learned from the short-lived program to advocate for improvements to the TANF program and for subsidized employment opportunities for low-income parents through TANF and other programs.

“ALMOST ALL OF THE MONEY THAT WENT TO THIS (TANF SUBSIDIZED JOBS) WENT DIRECTLY INTO WAGES”

– ELIZABETH LOWER-BASCH, CLASP SENIOR POLICY ANALYST, ON NPR’S MARKETPLACE

INVESTING IN POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

NEW CENTER AIMS TO ENSURE MORE LOW-INCOME PEOPLE HAVE ACCESS TO EDUCATION, TRAINING AND GOOD JOBS



Federal policymakers responded to seemingly intractable high unemployment in 2010 by introducing a number of bills designed to spur jobs creation. While this was indeed necessary, there was and continues to be a more complex, structural issue at play that jobs creation can't solve: many of the jobs lost with the sinking economy aren't coming back and many newly created jobs will require a higher level of skill than a significant percent of the workforce has.

Ensuring the nation's continued economic competitiveness will require investing in its existing human resources and making sure those who are entering the workforce and those who have years left in the workforce have the requisite skills to qualify for jobs the changing economy will create. This includes low-skill, low-wage workers who typically aren't part of the public discourse regarding the nation's continued economic competitiveness.

CLASP in September 2010 formally launched its Center for Postsecondary and Economic Success (C-PES) for this very reason—to make sure low-skill, low-income workers have opportunity to earn postsecondary credentials that have value in the labor market. Acquiring marketable skills will allow these workers to compete in the changing labor market, better support their families, and contribute to the nation's economic engine.

The Center is funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates, Joyce and Ford foundations, all of which have made improving postsecondary access and success a top priority.

CLASP's approach is to increase awareness and political will to address this national challenge as well as secure more resources and investment from public and private sources. Policymakers and the public must recognize that the nation simply can't afford to leave

low-skill workers behind. At the same time, policymakers must recognize that some low-skill people may face unique challenges that prevent them from persisting in completing credentials they need and want. These non-traditional students may have to balance family and work demands. Or, they may not have ready access to support services such as transportation and child care.

Research shows that low-skilled and low-income adults can succeed in college when they receive targeted supports designed to promote persistence and completion, including student financial aid programs crafted specifically for adult students. Such programs consider family budgets and the need for flexible courses and programs.

Promising strategies include career pathways that link adult literacy and basic skills to postsecondary education and training and also provide academic and support services that lower-income, lower-skilled students need to complete postsecondary credentials.

CLASP recognizes there aren't unlimited resources for postsecondary education, which is why we also promote policies that would make better use of existing federal and state resources to address students' unique needs. In the long term, investing in postsecondary access and success will not only benefit individuals, it will create stronger, economically secure families and will benefit businesses, which will have a broader field of qualified workers. Ultimately, it will create a stronger national economy.

ENGAGING BUSINESS SUPPORT FOR PAID SICK DAYS

Nationwide, nearly 44 million workers lack paid sick days and are in the difficult position of having to decide between a paycheck and taking needed time off to recover from illness. Only two cities, San Francisco and Washington D.C., have paid sick days legislation. As part of its work/life and job quality work, CLASP advocates for state and federal paid sick days policies that would allow more workers to take time off when they need to tend to their own or a family member's health.

More and more businesses are realizing supporting paid sick days legislation is the right thing to do and are joining CLASP in its campaign to secure a federal and local paid sick days laws. In 2010, the U.S. Women's Chamber of Commerce became the latest in a growing number of chambers of commerce to support this important policy for workers. CLASP was instrumental in securing this support by engaging the women's chamber and defining paid sick days as a family and women's issue.

To secure even more business support, CLASP launched a one-stop shop that includes resources and information to help supportive business owners and advocates make the case that worker friendly policies such as paid sick days help maintain employee morale and health but also can boost businesses' bottom lines. We created a comprehensive set of outreach tools, including a toolkit with sample policies for employers, videos and testimony of supportive business owners, and ways to connect with CLASP for technical assistance.



MORE AND MORE BUSINESSES ARE REALIZING SUPPORTING PAID SICK DAYS LEGISLATION IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO AND ARE JOINING CLASP IN ITS CAMPAIGN TO SECURE A FEDERAL AND LOCAL PAID SICK DAYS LAWS.

Jennifer Piallat is one of the featured employers that provided testimony. The owner of Zazie restaurant in San Francisco, she said, "In particular, it's been good for employees who have been injured. I had an employee who broke his arm and was able to cash in all 72 hours of his paid sick leave and it kept him in his house. [But] over half of my employees have never cashed in a paid sick day. It's

ended up costing me maybe one-eighth of what I expected it to." Later in 2010, Piallat again spoke out for paid sick days at a White House forum on workplace flexibility.

Employers like Piallat are not the only ones demonstrating support for worker-friendly policies. In the fall, CLASP worked with Washington D.C.-based Employment Justice Center to hold the first local Carrotmob, a reverse boycott that rewards businesses for good practices. During the D.C. Carrotmob campaign, consumers voted among restaurants voicing support for extending paid sick days to tipped restaurant employees. On November 13, hundreds of consumers mobbed local favorite and winner Teatism with business to thank the restaurant for its paid sick days support. Since the event, several restaurants in the Washington area have said they plan to offer paid time off for illnesses to their tipped employees.

OPPORTUNITY AND EQUAL JUSTICE

CLASP ADVOCATES FOR POLICIES THAT SUPPORT ITS VISION OF AN AMERICA IN WHICH POVERTY IS RARE, THERE IS JUSTICE FOR ALL AND ALL PEOPLE CAN PARTICIPATE EQUALLY. IN 2010, CLASP:



- Advanced broad coalition efforts to increase funding for Legal Services Corporation, and to eliminate restrictions imposed by Congress on how legal aid programs can use their funds.
- Engaged congressional staff around issues in the Civil Access to Justice Act of 2009, which CLASP helped draft, and negotiated with the Legal Services Corporation to resolve issues related to confidentiality and access to records.
- Published *The Future of Civil Legal Aid: Initial Thoughts* in the University of Pennsylvania's Journal of Law and

Social Change, and presented to students and faculty at the University's law school on the importance of civil legal aid for promoting equal justice.

- Called for modernizing the federal poverty measure to more accurately account for income and expenses, and launched a national effort for state poverty commission members to urge release of a supplemental measure as a much needed tool for state policymakers.
- Advised established or nascent poverty commissions around the country on effective strategies for tackling poverty, and connected state advocates with other advocates to share information such as strategies for establishing a commission.
- Provided technical assistance to national colleague organizations and advocates, including helping design a congressional briefing series and offering partner organizations information on successful strategies to reduce poverty.
- Managed *Spotlight on Poverty and Opportunity: The Source for News, Ideas and Action*, a non-partisan initiative that brings together diverse perspectives from the political, policy, advocacy and foundation communities to find solutions to the economic hardship confronting millions of Americans. During the course of the year, thought leaders from across the political spectrum contributed 73 exclusive commentaries, and *Spotlight* produced 16 webcasts covering a range of topics from workers rights to postsecondary education.

“THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY MUST BE A PART OF THIS SOLUTION. THEY NEED TO KNOW THAT IF WE ALLOW POVERTY TO CONTINUE IN THE NATION ... IT HAS AN ECONOMIC CONSEQUENCE.”

— JODIE LEVIN-EPSTEIN, CLASP DEPUTY DIRECTOR, IN THE MONTGOMERY ADVERTISER

REDUCING POVERTY IN THE STATES

In September 2010, the U.S. Census Bureau released sobering data. The number of people poor in America was at the highest level ever recorded, with the poverty rate reaching a 15-year high of 14.3 percent. Further, the gap between rich and poor was its widest since the Census began keeping track in 1967.

Even before the Great Recession, state governments had begun to take steps to improve economic opportunity by establishing commissions to identify ways to reduce poverty. In 2010, CLASP focused extensively on promoting these commissions' important work. A central component included partnering with members of state commissions as varied as Alabama, Michigan and Vermont to share effective strategies, and even some pitfalls, with the goal to move forward poverty-reducing policies and increase the economic mobility of low-income families.

The high-level attention of task forces or commissions has been critical in shoring up the political and public support needed to develop and enact poverty-reducing policies. Nineteen states, plus Washington, D.C., and the U.S. Virgin Islands, have created poverty commissions since CLASP began tracking them. Eleven of these states also have established an explicit poverty reduction target such as cutting poverty in half in a decade, and 16 state commissions have released policy recommendations. These commissions have helped reframe public conversations around poverty. For example, a number of states have made the case that persistent poverty reduces economic productivity. Freedom from poverty as a human right has become part of the discourse as well, helping to change



public perception about how to think about and approach poverty.

Adequately gauging poverty remains a hurdle, however. A modernized poverty measure would help answer essential policy questions, particularly the effect key government programs have on reducing poverty. CLASP supported the Obama Administration's call for a Supplemental Poverty Measure and coordinated an effort by state legislators and members of state poverty task forces in support of that effort. The Supplemental Poverty Measure is a serious first step toward painting a more accurate picture of poverty in the United States, largely by better accounting for sources of income, such as the Earned Income Tax Credit and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or Food Stamps, as well as necessary expenses like child care. Nearly 140 poverty commission members from 13 states and the Virgin Islands signed a letter to Congress and the Census urging release of a supplemental measure as a much-needed tool for policymakers in states.

The Supplemental Poverty Measure was to be released in September 2011, but as of this writing, Congress

has yet to approve the funding needed to move from the research phase to full production.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

CLASP serves as a link between advocates in states across the country, with and without poverty commissions, to share lessons learned, strategies and research. In 2010, CLASP connected advocates working on a bill to establish the California Economic Security Task Force with advocates in Delaware, Illinois and Alabama, to learn about funding for their task force operations, and CLASP also advised Georgia advocates on a strategy around introducing a commission bill.

At events, CLASP-managed *Spotlight on Poverty: The Source for News, Ideas and Action* presented advocates with lessons the United States can pull from strategies used in the United Kingdom to tackle poverty. Just five years after the UK government set a target to eliminate child poverty by 2020, it cut its child poverty rate in half in absolute terms. Advocates nationwide heard from poverty experts on valuable strategies that translate to the American system.

These CLASP initiatives have heightened the national conversation on poverty. Several states have set short- and long-term goals to reduce poverty, and have begun taking great steps to meet those goals. Nationally, the media has widely covered families' increased hardship since the recession. CLASP continues to build on its work of forging relationships throughout states to share effective strategies and grow efforts nationwide to put ideas into action on reducing poverty and promoting opportunity.

CLASP 40TH ANNIVERSARY

IN SEPTEMBER 2010, CLASP CELEBRATED ITS 40-YEAR HISTORY WITH AN EVENING RECEPTION ATTENDED BY 350 SUPPORTERS COMMITTED TO OUR MISSION OF PROMOTING POLICIES THAT WORK FOR LOW-INCOME FAMILIES. CLASP’S WORK REACHES ACROSS LOCAL, STATE AND FEDERAL POLICY ON A HOST OF ISSUES, AND THE EVENING WAS A WONDERFUL OPPORTUNITY FOR CLASP TO CELEBRATE ITS LONG HISTORY WITH OUR MANY COLLEAGUES AND FRIENDS WHO HELP MAKE OUR EFFORTS SUCCESSFUL.

Melody Barnes, Director of the White House Domestic Policy Council, and Ellen S. Alberding, President of the Joyce Foundation, joined Angela Glover Blackwell, Founder and CEO of PolicyLink, and Bob Greenstein, Founder and Executive Director of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities in presenting CLASP’s accomplishments.

At the reception, CLASP announced the launch of its 40th anniversary policy series, Policy and Promise for Low-Income People in America. Hosted by CLASP’s policy experts, the series welcomes thought leaders from the policy, research and advocacy arenas to discuss and debate the most promising strategies to strengthen children, youth and families, create pathways to good jobs, and expand opportunity and equal justice for low-income communities.

The series, which continued into 2011, kicked-off in November 2010 with best-selling author, Rhodes Scholar and Citigroup Executive Wes Moore, who reflected on how two young men with the same name and similar backgrounds ended up leading very different lives and what role policy can play in affecting our life trajectories.



PREVIOUS PAGE: Director of the White House Domestic Policy Council, Melody Barnes, and CLASP Board Chair, Joe Onek; Reception guests mingle at the Carnegie Institution for Science.

THIS PAGE (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT): Founder and Executive Director of the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, Bob Greenstein; Founder and CEO of PolicyLink, Angela Glover Blackwell; Melody Barnes; Executive Director of CLASP, Alan W. Houseman, and President of the Joyce Foundation, Ellen S. Alberding.

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STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2010

ASSETS	
CURRENT ASSETS	
Cash and cash equivalents.....	\$1,264,778
Investments.....	\$671,394
Receivables:	
<i>Grants receivables, current portion</i>	\$3,397,000
<i>Other</i>	\$35,721
Prepaid expenses.....	\$100,072
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	\$5,468,965
FURNITURE AND EQUIPMENT	
Equipment	\$272,319
Less: Accumulated depreciation.....	(\$175,151)
Net Furniture and equipment.....	\$97,168
NON-CURRENT ASSETS	
Grants receivable, net of current maturities.....	\$175,000
Deposits	\$39,160
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	\$214,160
TOTAL ASSETS.....	
\$5,780,293	

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	
CURRENTS LIABILITIES	
Capital lease obligation, long-term portion	\$17,853
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	\$46,990
Accrued salaries and related benefits	\$197,218
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	\$262,061
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	
Capital lease obligation, long-term portion	\$12,460
Deferred rent abatement	\$109,638
Total non-current liabilities	\$122,098
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$384,159
NET ASSETS	
Unrestricted	\$965,424
Temporarily restricted.....	\$4,430,710
TOTAL NET ASSETS	5,396,134
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS.....	
\$5,780,293	

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES
AND CHANGE IN NET ASSETS

AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2010

REVENUE

Foundation grants.....	\$4,954,600
Contributions	\$134,745
Investment income	\$39,792
Other revenue.....	\$21,712
Net assets released from donor restrictions.....	\$0
TOTAL REVENUE	\$5,150,849

EXPENSES

PROGRAM SERVICES:	
Family Policy	\$4,673,856
Legal Services.....	\$287,377
TOTAL PROGRAM SERVICES	\$4,961,233

SUPPORTING SERVICES:	
Management and General.....	\$63,119
Fundraising	\$188,288
TOTAL SUPPORTING SERVICES	\$251,407


TOTAL EXPENSES.....	\$5,212,640
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Change in net assets before other item.....	(\$61,791)
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OTHER ITEM

Provision for deferred rent abatement	(\$109,638)
Change in net assets	(\$171,429)
Net assets at beginning of year	\$5,567,563

NET ASSETS AT END OF YEAR.....	\$5,396,134
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“CLASP IS AN ORGANIZATION THAT BOTH PARTIES RELY ON. EVEN IF MEMBERS DON’T AGREE, THEY CAN’T RUN FROM WHAT CLASP HAS TO SAY. THEIR WORK IS SOLID, THOROUGH AND EXTREMELY WELL-RESPECTED ON THE HILL.”

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