

Dream of a Nation

Book Project Overview

Introduction

Dream of a Nation is a national public awareness and capacity building effort that is designed to raise awareness of key social and environmental issues and generate revenue for the civil society movement. The first phase of the effort is a book-in-progress and will be later expanded to include radio and film efforts. Cognitive learning research shows that individuals absorb better through thematic learning. However, few public awareness efforts have ever integrated a range of social and environmental issues under one theme. The *Dream of a Nation* project takes this innovative approach and has assembled an exemplary team of partner organizations and individuals, who have already committed to authoring essays and participating in future public awareness efforts. The project is also all about wealth sharing - offering a return on investment by sharing all revenue generated; giving 50% of the profits to participating organizations with the remaining 50% earmarked for future media projects designed to increase awareness and inspire action.

Project Description

Completion of Public Awareness Tool and Implementation of National Issue Awareness Effort

Public awareness is a central foundation for change and innovation as can be evidenced by the power of *An Inconvenient Truth* - Al Gore's book and film in changing the debate related to climate change. The first phase of the Dream of a Nation project is a public awareness and capacity building campaign and book-in-progress that is being authored by pioneering organizations and individuals that are focused on supporting transformations related to: Government Accountability, Active Citizenry, Building Peace, Environmental Stewardship and Halting Global Warming, Media Reform, Improved Education, Human Rights, Ethical Capitalism, and Economic Equality. In an effort to popularize the issues and reach Americans young and old and across party lines, Dream of a Nation is designed to be a hybrid of *State of the World* and *Time* magazine—with its message conveyed through compelling images, graphics, and essays by some of the world's leading organizations and individuals. The book spans 11 chapters and 40 essays and, at present, 38 essays are in process and will be completed by December 15th with a June 2009 publish date. Core funding is needed to cover costs associated with book and web design, national multi-media promotion, and to provide seed funding for phase two of the effort. The second long-term phase of the project is expanded public awareness through the use of web, radio, and film.

Movement and Capacity Building

Dream of a Nation is fundamentally about movement and capacity building as 100% of all revenue generated will be used for expanded public awareness efforts with 50% returning to the nearly 40 leading organizations that are participating in the project. Accordingly, as the book and national effort succeeds, it will be possible for a small initial foundation investment to be leveraged to potentially generate millions for the civil society movement.

Project Innovation and Partnership Despite cognitive learning research that proves that individuals absorb better through thematic learning, few public awareness efforts have ever integrated the diverse voices and messages of organizations working on a range of civic and environmental issues under one theme. The Dream of a Nation project takes this innovative

approach and has assembled an exemplary team of committed partner organizations and individuals that are now in the process of completing essays including:

Mayor Bloomberg	Teaching Tolerance	Amy Goodman
Veterans for Peace	Alice Walker	Physicians for Social Responsibility
Walter Cronkite	Institute for Public Accuracy	Economic Policy Institute
Equity in Education	Common Cause	Union of Concerned Scientists
Public Citizen	Environmental Defense	Center for a New American Dream
Green For All	National Priorities Project	Nuclear Age Peace Foundation

And nearly 20 other leading individuals and organizations

Deepening Awareness and Expanding Support for Key Issues

Dream of a Nation, as its title reflects, covers a wide range of issues and explores the problems as well as success models and solutions. Listed below is a representative selection of topics and committed contributors drawn from a more comprehensive outline of 11 chapters:

A People-Centered & Accountable Government: *Mayor Bloomberg, National Priorities Project, others*

Strengthening Communities: *Teaching Tolerance, Majora Carter, Winona LaDuke, and others*

Citizen Stewardship: *Dr. Jerry Linenger, Global Footprint Network, Center for a New American Dream*

A Civic-Minded Media: *Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting, Walter Cronkite, Democracy Now, and others*

An Equitable and Green Economy: *Economic Policy Institute, Green For All, and others*

Waging Peace: *Veterans for Peace, Nuclear Age Peace Foundation, and others*

Ethical Capitalism: *Paul Hawken, Environmental Defense, Dr. Michael Conroy, and others*

Improving Health: *Physicians for Social Responsibility, Dr. Holly Atkinson, Dr. Victoria Maizes, and others*

Re-Powering America: *Union of Concerned Scientists, Al Gore (speech adaptation), Worldwatch, and others*

Necessary Priorities in Education: *Equity in Education, Campaign for Environmental Literacy, and others*

expanded and detailed book outline available

Desired Outcomes

The primary desired outcomes for the Dream of a Nation project in the short and long-term include:

- (1) Effective and sustained integration of key civil and environmental themes as central to American progress in the mainstream media and public discourse
- (2) Increased capacity building for national organizations through revenue generation (50% profit share) of \$1.5 million in revenue from book sales of at least 500,000 units within 5 years
- (3) Use of Dream of a Nation as a supplemental educational resource in at least 200 colleges and universities and 1000 high schools
- (4) Revenue generation for future media projects from the remaining 50% of profits

Timeline and Benchmarks

Spring – Summer 08: Book structure, contributor research and outreach, etc. **(completed)**

Summer – Winter 08: Essay submissions, editing, **(90% of essays in process)**

Winter 08 – Spring 09: Book design, web development, multi-media planning & design

Spring 09 - Ongoing: Book completion and multi-organizational national promotion effort

Fall 09 and thereafter: Capacity building and new media project development

Evaluation and Tracking It is difficult to quantitatively evaluate the synergistic effects of programs that work to integrate key ideas and information into the public sphere. A project of this sort can lead to millions of Americans grasping and participating in a broader progressive shift through exposure in mainstream media outlets or can affect the policy direction and messaging of public officials. At a minimum however, staff will track viewership and listener numbers that result from the national promotion effort, annual book distribution and sales totals, efficacy of capacity building (through revenue generated and disbursed to participating organizations), number of formal and informal institutions using Dream of a Nation as a learning tool, mainstream media issue and book coverage, and web traffic.

Fiscal Sponsor, Publisher, and Project Director Qualifications Social and Environmental Entrepreneurs (SEE) is the project's non-profit fiscal sponsor and serves in this capacity for nearly 70 projects worldwide. In operation since 1994, SEE's mission is to nurture and encourage ecological and humanitarian education and activism. Lantern Books is slated to be the publisher; should the rights to the book not be acquired by a larger publishing house. Based in New York and specializing in social and environmental topics, Lantern has over 500 books in print and is best known as the publisher of Nobel laureate, Wangari Maathai. Tyson Miller is the project director-editor and has been developing innovative programs for the past 15 years. He is currently the founder and director of the Green Press Initiative—a national effort aimed at improving the ecological footprint of the book and newspaper publishing sectors and the paper industry at large. Earlier in his career, he was heavily involved in media efforts -while still an undergraduate student at UCLA, he co-produced and co-directed an award winning documentary, *Generation Earth*, to spread the successes of environmental education programs around the country. It received four stars from the National Science Teachers Association and has been seen by over 1 million students. His programs have been awarded by the U.S. EPA, Association of Environmental Professionals, and California Governor's Office and featured in the NY Times, USA Today, NPR, BBC, ABC News, Chicago Tribune, and many other outlets. Publishers Weekly recently named Tyson "One of the 50 Most Influential People Under 40" in the U.S. book industry.

Contact Information:

Tyson Miller, Project Director/Editor

tyson@seeinnovation.org / 828.994.0859