

# *Hidden in Plain Sight*

## **OUTREACH UPDATE**

### **Early July 2017 Report to SVF Board**

Since the data reports were released in early May, a number of board members have been working hard to get the messages out in a variety of ways. We have briefed well over 200 people in person, and reached thousands of others through the media and newsletter. And we have distributed about half of the 275 full reports we had printed, and perhaps 300 of the 1000 executive summaries. The purpose of this outreach phase is:

- To attract attention to the key findings of the research through understanding and dialogue
- To catalyze interest and activity, as community leaders reckon with the findings and consider the ways they might take action;
- And to further curate ideas about how the community can best move forward (improving on the initial list in the report), with a special eye to the ultimate role that SVF might play.

We have also been hoping to find and engage potential new board members through this engagement process.

This major outreach work is expected to last into the fall (as things will naturally begin to slow down in the summer); there are many additional bases that need to be touched. The work of getting the word out has been distributed across various board members, with the report writing team playing a consistent role in briefings for obvious reasons. In her role as president, Peg has been particularly active attending meetings and following up with interested leaders. Katherine and the SVF administrative coordinator Audrey have been trying to keep track of the overall process (to avoid duplication of effort and to keep things moving).

By the close of the process sometime this fall, we expect to know a lot more collectively about several things:

- What others in the community are prepared to do (or not);
- Where leadership is emerging (or not), to take forward particular solutions;
- And ideas that have some support (and therefore, the most chance of success).

This overall outreach process is designed to inform the SVF board to make the best choices about the role SVF can play, given our current resources and the board's willingness to work and follow up.

Below is a summary of who we have reached so far, by constituency category, with notes on what is planned and board members who have been playing a role. [Outreach that is still to come is highlighted in blue.](#)

## **Media and Communications**

- **Media Coverage Excellent**—prominent play in Sonoma I-T and Sonoma Sun upon release. Additional favorable publicity in Valley of the Moon magazine and Santa Rosa Press-Democrat. See In the Media on SVF website for complete list, <http://sonomavalleyfund.org/in-the-media/>. Report team invested heavily in this media launch.
- **SVF Newsletter** special edition upon report release, and second edition citing media play. Donald has led here.
- Once distribution and outreach is further along, [it probably makes sense to submit a column or columns to the local papers about what we have found, and to follow up with more newsletter communication](#). This would not be until the fall, as available time at present is still being used on essential meetings and briefings.
- The I-T is now planning its own series on nonprofits. While this press coverage may mention SVF, it is not directly related to our work, as the paper has been planning this for some time. Depending on the nature of this coverage, it may be important to separate our work from this new coverage.

## **Community Briefings**

The development committee, led by Art, organized **two community briefings, on May 25 and June 1**. Together, they were attended by more than 100 people, and many board members attended these sessions, staffed them and helped welcome people. A follow-up note and thank you was sent to all.

Some attendees to the meetings requested follow-up meetings, and various members of the board are following through on these requests. Each meeting is different, but in some of them participants are offering ideas for action (which have been captured in a separate memo).

No further larger public meetings are planned at this time. [One important question is whether \(and how\) to attempt to present the findings with Spanish translation in the Springs to seek input from a broader cross section of the community.](#)

## **SVF Donor Community and Donor Outreach (past leadership, and donors past and potential)**

Art and the development committee, assisted by Whit and Ted, have had a number of discussions about the best approach. A few donors and past leaders have been approached in informal ways, and one more formal discussion session was held in early July with two community leaders who gathered at the invitation of Whit and Ted.

There have been two different views of the best approach:

- Some feel it is to talk to “friends of SVF” and also major donor/leaders in the community to get their reaction to the report, and to discuss potential ways to move forward (judging as a result of these conversations where support might be forthcoming, in time, leadership and money). These conversations would not explicitly ask for support at this point. If this is the approach, then these conversations can be scheduled at any time.
- Others feel that it is better to go to donors with an idea or ideas for action, and ask for their reaction and financial support. If this is the approach, then the board needs to decide when to undertake this approach (which commits SVF to follow through that it must be prepared to act on). Some feel that SVF is ready for this now (because of the many ideas in the report). Others want to move more slowly, given that we are all volunteers and have limits on what we can do.

It may be that the approach will vary depending on who the potential donor is, and their relationship to SVF. Ultimately it is up to the board to decide what role, responsibilities and activities it will undertake.

The developmental committee continues to discuss and is in charge of planning this outreach.

### **Key Donor and Community Leadership Groups**

- A presentation was made to **Community Foundation Sonoma County board**. Peg is in close touch with Beth as the rollout continues, and Karin Demarest has also been briefed.
- A special two-hour session was held with **Impact 100 leadership** (current and previous board members), including a long brainstorming discussion about ideas for action to help them prepare for their July strategy retreat.
- Michael Mulcahy and Katherine met with Patricia Shults of the **Chamber of Commerce** to get her views.
- Michael is arranging presentations and/or discussions sometime in the future with **Rotary and the leadership for Wine Country Weekend/Vintners and Growers**. The Kiwanis have recently also requested a presentation at a regular meeting.
- **Sustainable Sonoma** has been invited to give a presentation to the SVF board in September. Their launch has recently been announced in the papers, but their leaders are on sabbatical until early August (Richard Dale and Caitlin Cornwall from the Ecology Center).
- **Professional Advisors Briefing(s)**. The development committee, with Lew in the lead, will set up briefing(s) for professional advisors whose work touches on donors, such as lawyers, accountants and real estate agents. This represents a chance for SVF to jumpstart these relationships.

## **Operating Nonprofits—Collective Forums**

- The nonprofit **executive director Roundtable** for Sonoma Valley is an informal group of about 20 of the EDs of the larger nonprofits. The report writers (plus Peg and some other board members) have now met with them four times, twice before the report was published and twice since the report was published. They are eager to work more closely in partnership.
- Our **capacity building cohort** (funded by the Todd Trust) scheduled a special June session to discuss the report. They apparently discussed specific ideas. [We await instructions on how and when we may hear from them.](#)
- A presentation was made to the **health roundtable**, a group representing various private and public agencies working on health.
- [The Ministerial Alliance](#) (made up of all of the main religious groups in town) will be approached for a briefing in the fall. Their leadership is in transition at present.

## **Operating Nonprofits—Individual Organizations**

- The report team was invited to present to the **La Luz** board and community, and did so in early June. Similarly, the report team presented to the leadership of **First Congregational Church Sonoma**, at their invitation.
- Education Foundation leaders requested a meeting to go over details of the findings they didn't understand.
- [Two other organizations have requested presentations that have been scheduled: SOS in July and the Springs Alliance in August.](#)
- Kimberly is organizing **additional nonprofit outreach**, as part of the shift in the SVF nonprofit partnership program. She and the report team are prioritizing the following 9 organizations (for a variety of different reasons): Vintage House, Education Foundation, Community Center, Boys & Girls Club, SV Museum of Art, Sooma Land Trust, 10K Degrees, Mentoring Alliance, SV Community HealthCenter. Kimberly will be reaching out to them to figure out how best to engage.

## **Political and Governmental Leadership**

Nancy has been in the lead to organize briefings for our political leadership. The report team just met with County Supervisor Susan Gorin, who requested several other meetings for county officials in August. Briefings for the Sonoma city manager, city staff and City Council members are planned but have not been scheduled yet.