

Basic Organizing Skills Training for Community Activists
in California's Central Valley

Background

California's Central Valley is the state's fastest growing region and, yet, remains one of the poorest regions in the nation. 1980 Census of Population data show that of the ten metropolitan areas in the United States with the highest proportion of residents supported by general assistance payments (welfare) no less than six are in California. And all six are in the Central Valley: Visalia (#1), Stockton (#2), Yuba City (#5), Fresno (#6), Modesto (#8) and Redding (#9). The remaining four metropolitan areas with the highest proportion of residents on welfare are Eastern metropolitan centers such as New York City. The Fresno metropolitan area, center of the San Joaquin Valley, is expected to surpass San Francisco in total population within the next fifteen years. As a measure of the seriousness of the problems of that region Fresno was recently determined to be the least desirable place in which to live in a ranking of 277 leading American cities compiled by the League of Cities.

An independent compilation of recent data shows that non-metropolitan areas of the San Joaquin Valley are significantly poorer and suffer from even more serious social problems than do metropolitan areas. These conditions have deteriorated to a point in the vast San Joaquin Valley farming areas where they have been characterized as

- "(1) regional dependence on a single industry - agriculture;
- (2) a dualized class system with a few landowning elites at the top and large numbers of landless workers at the bottom; and
- (3) a rigid status system in which there are no institutional or other means, e.g., education, for movement between the classes, either upward or downward."

Dean MacCannell and Jerry White
"The Social Costs of Large-Scale Agriculture"
in Land Reform, American Style
Charles C. Geisler and Frank J. Popper, eds.
Rowman & Allanheld, 1984, p. 52

The Problem

Human Service and community based organizations face a period of unprecedented crisis. Diminishing federal, state and local government support combined with increasing demand for the vital services they provide are the major factors contributing to this crisis. Relatively little help in skills training is available, especially in the Sacramento, Salinas and San Joaquin Valleys. Staff and community volunteers need training in such basic skills as Grassroots Fundraising, Holding an Effective Meeting, Leaflet and Newsletter Production, Canvassing, Integrating Volunteers, and other topics.

Many human service groups depend entirely on government funding as well as paid staff and will be put out of business if they do not learn how to develop community support. Skills training will help groups to help themselves.

CIRS Skills Training Workshops

We have offered training workshops on an intermittent basis over the past five and one-half years. During 1980 we participated in a contract with the VISTA agency to provide pre-service training to several hundred VISTA volunteers. Over the past three years we have offered Basic Organizing Skills Workshops (two days each) in Arcata, Chico, Davis, Fresno, Salinas, Oakland, and Bakersfield. In late 1984 the City of Davis sponsored a CIRS workshop on Fundraising. Evaluation forms filled out by participants in these programs have been overwhelmingly positive. Copies of these evaluations are available on request. An unsolicited letter about our Davis Fundraising Workshop is attached.

We are seeking support to initiate a systematic skills training program for staff and volunteers of Central Valley human service and community based organizations. The training program we plan to offer comprises fifteen workshops in five major topic areas: Fundraising, Effective Public Speaking and Persuasion, Basic Organizing Skills, Public Records Investigation, and Pesticide Safety. Support is needed to (1) develop and print a training manual for use in the workshops; (2) develop and print a high-quality brochure describing the full range of training programs we offer; and (3) support staff time to contact existing organizations and agencies in order to develop a schedule of training workshops in various communities.

The main goal of this project is the training of staff and volunteers of human service and community based organizations in topic areas where they have deficiencies, sometimes unrecognized. In contrast with existing organizer training programs available in a few major cities our workshops are brought to the community where the training is needed, thus saving on travel and lodging expenses for trainees. Specific needs vary considerably from person to person and from group to group. CIRS staff consults with groups for whom the training is being conducted to select a particular menu of workshops to ensure that the goal of providing assistance on topics where help is needed will be met. Finally, CIRS skills training emphasizes basic nuts and bolts skills as opposed to a strong emphasis on such theoretical topics as Strategy and Tactics. Thus, participants learn how to chair a meeting, design and lay out a leaflet, speak persuasively (whether in public or one-to-one), hold a public outreach event, raise a targetted amount of money from grassroots sources, and similar basic skills.

It is our intention to offer this skills training program as a regular permanent part of CIRS activities as opposed to the current ad hoc manner of offering an occasional workshop. It is anticipated that we will offer eight workshops per year, six on fee schedule of rates commensurate with their economic value and two on a modest fee basis.

There are no organizations providing the range of organizing skills training workshops that we plan to provide. High quality adult education classes do exist in a few specialized topics, e.g., classes in grant proposal writing offered by the Grantsmanship Center. However, the orientation of the workshops we offer is fundamentally different. We do not teach grant writing skills and instead emphasize community based fundraising. The Organize Training Center in San Francisco offers classes in community organizing but these differ from our program in three fundamental ways: (1) the content of the training offered by OTC is theoretical and more oriented to strategy and tactics of community organizing; (2) the curriculum offered by OTC is fixed and can not be readily tailored to meet the needs of a specific community group; and (3) training is normally offered in San Francisco requiring participants to not only meet the cost of the workshop but also pay for the additional expenses of travel and lodging. We have received OTC materials and have interviewed former trainees. Our training program is complementary to that offered by OTC.

The CIRS skills training program is innovative and can serve as a model for other parts of the state as well as the nation. The program is unique in four ways: (1) the principal components of our workshops are the teaching of simple practical skills, e.g., how to lay out an effective poster or leaflet; (2) we consult, in advance, with the client group to select a suitable package of workshops from the fifteen we offer; (3) we hire experienced trainers as consultants to teach the workshops that are needed; and (4) we travel to the community where the client group is based in order to maximize accessibility for community members.

The primary goal of this program is to improve the ability of non-profit human service groups to become self-reliant and not dependent upon funding by government agencies. Thus, if the program is successful there should be perceptible steps taken by the client group toward self-sufficiency. Moreover, if the training program itself is successful it will itself become fully self-supporting out of fees from clients. By design the program is intended to become self-sufficient in 18 months.

Project Plan

The project has several phases. In the first six months we expect to: (1) write and publish a training manual, and (2) produce a brochure describing the workshops that are available through CIRS. To write the manual we will use existing workshop outlines and tape recordings of actual workshops that we have offered in the past. Copies of the draft manuscript will be circulated among experienced workshop trainers for comment and suggestions. We plan to publish 1,000 copies of the training manual.

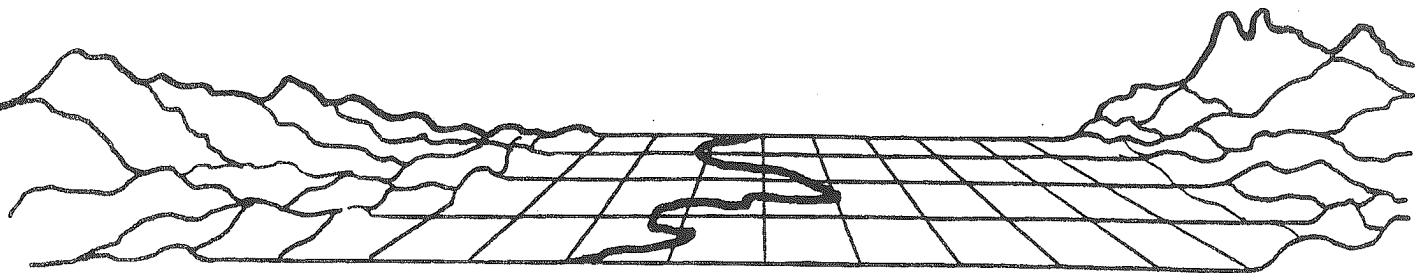
The brochure will be produced in a highly professional manner using photographs of workshops we have offered in the past and professional art work. We plan to produce 5,000 copies on high quality paper stock. A solicitation letter will be sent to human service and community based organizations in the Central Valley. Names and addresses

of groups will be culled from existing directories (such as county published human service directories) as well as from our own files and mailing lists. Follow-up telephone calls will be made to establish personal contact with as many groups as possible. Where feasible meetings will be arranged with key staff to outline our training program. In this manner we plan to develop a schedule of workshop offerings in various parts of the Central Valley. The goal will be to commit specific organizations to contract with CIRS for training. Workshop fees will be set on a scale that will provide for on-going self-support for the program.

This project will be directed by Dr. Don Villarejo. Dr. Villarejo has been active in adult education and college teaching for 16 years including 7 years as a full-time faculty member at UCLA. During the period of his affiliation with UCLA he was his department's nominee for the UCLA Distinguished Teaching Award, served as a member of the Council on Educational Development (a body supervising 11 full-time faculty and having authority to approve and offer innovative classes), chaired a 3 year program in innovative experiential education, and was awarded a \$10,000 grant from the UC Regents for innovative educational program development. While serving as Executive Director of CIRS he was hired by the California Agricultural Labor Relations Board to instruct all attorneys and field investigative staff of the ALRB in techniques of investigation of agricultural businesses. He has conducted training workshops in various subjects for the Housing Project (San Diego), Laurel Springs Educational Institute (Los Angeles), California Rural Legal Assistance (Modesto), Californians for a Fair Share (Oakland) among others.

TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET

Salary, Program staff	
Full time, six months; Half-time, twelve months	\$14,400
Employer taxes and fringe benefits @ 20%	2,880
Training manual, <u>Basic Organizing Skills</u>	
Typesetting	800
Printing and binding	3,000
Promotion	500
Training workshops brochure	
Typesetting	200
Artwork and photography	350
Printing	650
Workshop scheduling and promotion	
Solicitation letter and mailing	70
Telephone	650
Travel reimbursement	900
Photocopies	200
Miscellaneous	400
	<hr/>
Total project budget	\$25,000



433 Russell Blvd., Davis, Ca., 95616 916-756-6555
Mailing address: P.O. Box 530, Davis, Ca., 95617

NONPROFITS IN THE 1980'S: ACHIEVING SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Saturday, November 10, 1984

8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

City Council Chambers

23 Russell Boulevard, Davis

AGENDA

- | | |
|--------------|---|
| 8:30 - 9:00 | Registration |
| 9:00 - 9:15 | Welcome, introductions
Miriam Wells, California Institute for Rural Studies
Board Member |
| 9:15 - 10:15 | <u>Fundraising Is Organizing</u>
Elizabeth Martin, California Institute for Rural Studies
Staff Trainer |
| 10:15-10:25 | Break |
| 10:25-12:30 | <u>Planning For Fundraising: Basic Principles and
The Role of the Board</u>
Kim Klein, Grassroots Fundraising Journal Co-editor;
Fundraiser; Consultant |
| 12:30 - 1:30 | Lunch |
| 1:30 - 4:30 | Choice of Two Workshops: |
| | <u>Workshop I</u> |
| | Finding and Soliciting Major Donors
Kim Klein |
| | <u>Workshop II</u> |
| | Fundraising Potential of Existing Community Resources
Elizabeth Martin |
| 4:30 - 5:00 | Workshop Evaluation |



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ORGANIZING FOR ACTION

Skills Training for Community Activists

January 12, 1985

8:45 a.m.	Registration
9:00 a.m.	Welcome and Introductions
9:15 a.m.	The Theory of Organizing Don Villarejo, Executive Director California Institute for Rural Studies
10:15 a.m.	Making a Good Leaflet Elizabeth Martin, Researcher California Institute for Rural Studies
11:30 a.m.	Media Tactics Don Villarejo Elizabeth Martin
12:30 p.m.	Lunch
1:45 p.m.	Persuasive Public Speaking Jane Straus Consultant/Trainer
3:45 p.m.	Break
4:00 p.m.	Grassroots Fundraising Don Villarejo Elizabeth Martin
5:15 p.m.	Evaluations

ORGANIZING FOR ACTION

Skills Training for Community Activists

October 15 - 16, 1983

AGENDA

Saturday, October 15

8:45 a.m. Registration

9:00 a.m. Welcome and Introductions

9:15 a.m. The Theory of Organizing
Don Villarejo, Executive Director
California Institute for Rural Studies

10:00 a.m. Break into Workshops

Workshop I: Persuasive Public Speaking
Jane Straus, Consultant/Trainer

Workshop II: Making a Good Leaflet
Don Villarejo, California Institute for Rural Studies
Elizabeth Martin, California Institute for Rural Studies

12:00 Lunch

1:00 pm How to Make Meetings Work and Involve Volunteers
Elizabeth Martin, California Institute for Rural Studies

2:00 pm Break into Workshops

Workshop I: Making a Good Leaflet

Workshop II: Persuasive Public Speaking

3:45 pm Break

4:00 pm Media Tactics
Elizabeth Martin, Don Villarejo

5:30 pm Evaluations

Workshop participants are invited to spend the evening at a social gathering and potluck dinner sponsored by local community organizations, to be held at:

4266 Terrace
Oakland
(near 42nd & Broadway)

Sunday, October 16

10:00 a.m. Welcome and Introductions

10:15 a.m. Continuing the Struggle for Welfare Rights
Cassie Lopez, Teacher/Organizer
Co-Founder, Welfare Rights Organization, 1964

11:00 a.m. Building a Community Action Strategy
Elizabeth Martin, Chris Coombe

12:15 p.m. Lunch

1:15 p.m. Continuation of Strategy Session

2:30 p.m. Evaluation

Californians for a Fair Share is a coalition of organizations and individuals working together to: fight against cutbacks in human services; assure basic income support for poor people; and promote just alternatives to the current welfare system.

For more information call (415) 655-0706

Financial support for this skills training workshop was provided by

United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., Mission Action Committee,
Sacramento

Association of Legal Aid Workers, U.A.W.

This program has been conducted by the California Institute for Rural Studies and sponsored by Californians for a Fair Share. For more information about the California Institute for Rural Studies, please contact:

California Institute for Rural Studies
P.O. Box 530
Davis, CA 95617
(916) 756-6555

**Yolo County Sexual Assault
and Battered Women's Center**

222 D Street
Davis, California 95616
Business Phone (916) 758-0540

November 20, 1984

Ann Evans, Mayor
Davis City Council
23 Russell Blvd.
Davis, Ca. 95616

Dear Mayor Evans:

On behalf of the Yolo County Sexual Assault Center, Inc. I would like to thank you for sponsoring the recent fundraising training conference conducted by the California Institute for Rural Studies for local non-profit agencies. Elizabeth Martin and her staff did an excellent job of organizing the conference. Kim Klein, the guest speaker, was both pragmatic and inspiring in her approach to community fundraising. Since the Center has made a commitment to becoming more financially self-sufficient in the next few years, the conference was particularly helpful. I plan to share the information I gained from the conference with our new Board of Directors when it convenes in December.

If local non-profit agencies are going to continue to provide services which promote public safety and well-being in the 1980s, they must become more skilled at raising funds in non-traditional ways and begin coordinating their respective fundraising efforts. The CIRS training conference in November was an important and innovative step in this direction. It was also, I might add, a particularly cost-effective use of City monies. For these reasons I urge the Council to consider sponsoring similar training programs for community-based organizations on an on-going basis.

Sincerely,

Christine Fry
Executive Director

cc: Elizabeth Martin

CF:ymt

A skill building workshop

Saturday, November 17

RESEARCH FOR ACTION



A workshop to learn research/investigative skills in support of community organizing and grass-roots community action.

- How to locate and use public records documents.
- Slide illustrations of documents actually used in recent community struggles.
- How to determine owners of real estate property, vital to tenant organizing.
- Workshop exercises to enable participants to formulate research strategies.
- Bibliography and methodology guide for all participants.

California Institute for Rural Studies
P.O. Box 530
Davis, CA 95616

I will attend the "Research for Action" workshop on November 17.
Enclosed is the \$15 workshop fee.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Phone () _____

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17, Workshop begins promptly at 9:30 am and will continue until 3 pm.
Workshop location: Davis. Details and map provided to persons who register for workshop.

Instructor: Don Villarejo, California Institute for Rural Studies.

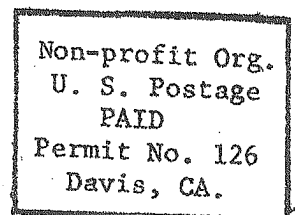
Workshop fee: \$15.

The "Research for Action" workshop has been presented to groups across the state, including

- Laurel Springs Educational Center, Organizer Training Institute
- California Rural Legal Assistance Community Workers Conference
- Lynwood Working Women's Center

To reserve a place at the Nov. 17 workshop fill out the coupon and return by November 1.

California Institute for Rural Studies
P.O. Box 530, Davis, Ca., 95616



January 15 & 16, 1983
15 y 16 de Enero, 1983
Salinas, California

1) Theory of Organizing/Teoria de Organizarse

Comments regarding/Comentario:

Content/Contenido:

Format/Plan

Style/Estilo de la instruccion:

Poor/Pobre	Fair/Medio	Good/Bueno	Excellent/Sobre Saliente
			/
			X
			/

2) Successful Meeting Chair Techniques/
Técnicas para Reuniones Eficaces

Comments regarding/Comentario:

Content/Contenido:

Format/Plan:

Style/Estilo de la instruccion:

			/
			/
			/

3) Effective Use of Volunteers/Usos Efectivos de los Servicios Voluntarios

Comments regarding/Comentario:

Content/Contenido:

Format/Plan

Style/Estilo de la instruction

Pobre/Poor	Fair/Medio	Good/Bueno	Excellent/Sobre Salient
			/
			/
			/

4) Persuasive Pubic Speaking/Discurrir
Expresivamente Enfrent del Publico

Comments regarding/Comentario:

Content/Contenido:

Format/Plan:

Style/Estilo de la instruccion:

			/
			/

5) Grassroots Fundraising/
Aumentando Fondos Para Entidades

Comments regarding/Comentario:

Content/Contenido:

Format/Plan:

Style/Estilo de la instruccion:

Poor/Pobre	Fair/Medio	Good/Bueno	Excellent/Sobre Saliente
			✓
			✓
			✓

6) Lobbying for Community Activists/
Antecamara para Activistas de la
Comunidad

Comments regarding/Comentario:

Content/Contenido:

Format/Plan:

Style/Estilo de la instruccion:
