



# **Ford Foundation records, Asset Building and Community Development Program (ASSETS), Vice President for Assets, Office Files of Dr. Melvin L. Oliver**

---

This finding aid was produced using ArchivesSpace on October 31, 2016.

Rockefeller Archive Center

15 Dayton Avenue  
Sleepy Hollow 10591

[archive@rockarch.org](mailto:archive@rockarch.org)

URL: <http://www.rockarch.org>

---

## Table of Contents

---

Summary Information .....	3
Biographical Note .....	4
Scope and Content Note .....	5
Arrangement .....	5
Administrative Information .....	5
Related Materials .....	6
Collection Inventory .....	7
Correspondence .....	7
Meetings, Conferences and Visits .....	8
Research and Writing .....	11

---

## Summary Information

---

<b>Repository:</b>	Rockefeller Archive Center
<b>Creator:</b>	Ford Foundation
<b>Title:</b>	Ford Foundation records, Asset Building and Community Development Program (ASSETS), Vice President for Assets, Office Files of Dr. Melvin L Oliver
<b>ID:</b>	FA508
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	1982-2009 (Bulk 1992-2004)
<b>Date [bulk]:</b>	bulk
<b>Physical Description:</b>	4 Cubic Feet
<b>Physical Description:</b>	(10 Hollinger document boxes)
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English
<b>Abstract:</b>	<p>The Asset Building and Community Development Program was established in October 1996 as part of a Foundation-wide program reorganization. The new program supported the work of a range of groups and individuals seeking to build the assets and capacities of poor communities through community-based activities, research, policy analysis, and advocacy. In 2009, the Asset Building and Community Development Program became the Economic Opportunity and Assets Program. Dr. Melvin L. Oliver joined the Ford Foundation in 1996. He served as the Foundation's first Vice President for Asset Building and Community Development and worked on issues relating to poverty, community economic development, and reproductive health. The Office Files of Melvin L. Oliver document his professional activities as Vice President of the Assets Program between 1996 and 2009. The bulk of the collection consists of correspondence concerning such subjects as ongoing grant activity, potential grantees, and Foundation policy, and briefing books from meetings, conferences, and field visits. A couple of files pertaining to Dr. Oliver's pre-Ford research and writing in Sociology during the 1980s can also be found in the collection.</p>

### Preferred Citation note

Information regarding the Rockefeller Archive Center's preferred elements and forms of citation can be found at <http://www.rockarch.org/research/citations.php>

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Biographical Note

---

Dr. Melvin L. Oliver was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1950. He received an undergraduate degree from William Penn College in Iowa (1972) and was awarded an M.A. (1974) and a PhD (1977) in Sociology from Washington University in St. Louis. In 1978, he joined the faculty of the University of California Los Angeles, where he worked for the next 17 years. He became known for his work in Sociology, receiving such honors as a fellowship grant from the Ford Foundation in 1982 and the title of “California Professor of the Year” from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching in 1994.

Dr. Oliver joined the Ford Foundation in 1996. He served as the Foundation’s first Vice President for Asset Building and Community Development and worked on issues relating to poverty, community economic development, and reproductive health. In 2004, he returned to academia, accepting an appointment as SAGE Sara Miller McCune Dean of Social Sciences and Professor of Sociology at the University of California Santa Barbara.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Organizational History

---

The Asset Building and Community Development Program was established in October 1996 as part of the Foundation-wide program reorganization in the 1997 fiscal year. It took over existing Foundation programs in Urban Poverty, Rural Poverty and Resources, Reproductive Health and Population, and Program-Related Investments. The Assets Program had three program units: Economic Development; Community and Resource Development; and Human Development and Reproductive Health. In 2009, the Asset Building and Community Development Program became the Economic Opportunity and Assets Program.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Scope and Content Note

---

The Office Files of Dr. Melvin L. Oliver, a well-known sociologist, document his professional activities between 1982 and 2009. The bulk of files pertain to his tenure as Vice President of the Assets Program at the Ford Foundation.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Arrangement

---

Arranged into 3 series.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## Administrative Information

---

### Publication Statement

Rockefeller Archive Center

15 Dayton Avenue

Sleepy Hollow 10591

[archive@rockarch.org](mailto:archive@rockarch.org)

URL: <http://www.rockarch.org>

### Immediate Source of Acquisition note

Ford Foundation archive was deposited at RAC in 2011. Ford Foundation records, correspondence, reports, program files and officers papers were transferred to, and accessioned by, RAC beginning in 2011. Accessions continue as necessary.

### Processing Information Note

The original total volume of 16 cubic feet accessioned by the Foundation Archives in 2010 has been reduced during processing to 4 cubic feet.

Duplicates, reference files containing papers, magazines, or other items of interest to Dr. Oliver but unrelated to the Foundation or Foundation-related activities, personal records and records from UCLA

pre-dating Dr. Oliver's employment at the Foundation were removed from the collection. Some of the accessioned boxes were brought to the Foundation by Dr. Oliver from his office in UCLA and held personal papers or university-specific documentation. These boxes were de-accessioned during processing for return to Dr. Oliver.

## **Conditions Governing Use note**

Completion of a use agreement is required prior to providing scholarly access. See RAC Head of Reference (or applicable designee) for details. Ford Foundation holds title, copyright and literary rights in the collection, in so far as it holds them. The Rockefeller Archive Center has authority to grant permission to cite and publish material from the collection for scholarly purposes. Permission to publish extensive excerpts, or material in its entirety, will be referred to the Ford Foundation.

## **Conditions Governing Access**

Records more than 10 years old are open for research with select materials restricted as noted. Brittle or damaged items are available at the discretion of RAC. Researchers interested in accessing digital media (floppy disks, CDs, DVDs, etc.) or audiovisual material (audio cassettes, VHS, etc.) in this collection must use an access surrogate. The original items may not be accessed because of preservation concerns. To request an access surrogate be made, or if you are unsure if there is an access surrogate, please contact an archivist.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

---

## **Related Materials**

---

### **Separated Materials**

A photograph of Dr. Oliver and a fellow Ford Foundation staff member at the Great Wall of China has been transferred to the Trustees and Staff Photo Collection.

### **Separated Materials**

Appendix A: Reports – Unpublished reports written by Ford Foundation staff and consultants were removed from their original folders, scanned and transferred to the Archives' collection of staff and consultant reports. See Appendix A for a list of these reports and their specific assigned number. The reports are listed in alphabetical order by author. The assigned number may be used to access reports in the online catalog.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Collection Inventory

### Correspondence, 1996-2002

#### Scope and Contents

This series consists of Mr. Oliver's incoming and outgoing correspondence and memoranda that Dr. Oliver arranged chronologically by year, and within years, alphabetically by correspondent. Dr. Oliver's separation of external correspondence from internal Ford Foundation memoranda was maintained. Subjects of correspondence include ongoing grant actions, potential grantees, Foundation policy, and other subjects. The files also contain copies of newspaper and magazine articles retained by Dr. Oliver for discussion or reference.

Title/Description	Instances	
Chron File (1 of 18): A-F, 1996	box 1	folder 1
Chron File (2 of 18): G-L, 1996	box 1	folder 2
Chron File (3 of 18): M-Q, 1996	box 1	folder 3
Chron File (4 of 18): S-Z, 1996	box 1	folder 4
Chron File (5 of 18): Memoranda, 1997	box 1	folder 5
Chron File (6 of 18): A-D, 1997	box 1	folder 6
Chron File (7 of 18): E-H, 1997	box 1	folder 7
Chron File (8 of 18): I-Z, 1997	box 1	folder 8
Chron File (9 of 18): Memoranda, 1998	box 2	folder 1
Chron File (10 of 18): A-L, 1998	box 2	folder 2
Chron File (11 of 18): M-Z, 1998	box 2	folder 3
Chron File (12 of 18): Memoranda, 1999	box 2	folder 4
Chron File (13 of 18): A-Z, 1999	box 2	folder 5
Chron File (14 of 18): Memoranda, 2000	box 2	folder 6
Chron File (15 of 18): A-Z, 2000	box 2	folder 7
Chron File (16 of 18): Memoranda, 2001	box 2	folder 8
Chron File (17 of 18): A-Z, 2001	box 2	folder 9
Chron File (18 of 18): A-Z, 2002	box 2	folder 10
DeGiovanni, Frank -- Correspondence re: PRIs, 1997-2009	box 2	folder 11

#### Conditions Governing Access:

#### Conditions Governing Access

Some of the records in this file are restricted because they are less than 10 years old. The restricted items have been segregated and are inaccessible. The file is open to research,

and physical removal of the segregated material is not necessary.

Date Restricted Material -- Contains records less than 10 years old -- Pertinent records are Open to scholarly research in 2017, 2018, and 2020.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Meetings, Conferences and Visits, 1991-2004

### Scope and Contents

As Vice President, Dr. Oliver traveled extensively, visiting grantee locations, attending conferences, and meeting with other Foundation staff members. This series is comprised of the briefing books and other materials he retained from his travels.

Title/Description	Instances	
Poverty and Race Research Action Council (PRRAC) Board Meeting, Washington D.C., Dec 16, 1996 -- Agenda, Notes, Correspondence, 1992-1996	box 3	folder 1
Natural Resources Management Program Officer Consultation, Napa Valley, CA, Jun 9-11, 1996 -- Memoranda, Agenda, Program Descriptions, Notes, Discussion Papers, Apr-Jun 1996	box 3	folder 2
Asset Program Retreat -- Agenda, Notes, Background, May 20-Jul 31, 1996	box 3	folder 3
Community Development Collaborative Partnership Conference -- Agenda, Memoranda, Jun 1996	box 3	folder 4
Development Finance Affinity Group Meeting, Positano, Italy, Nov 4-8, 1996 -- Meeting Book, Memoranda, Sep-Nov 1996	box 3	folder 5
Mexico City Field Office Visit -- Itinerary, Agenda, Meeting Book (1 of 2), Jan 2-10, 1997	box 3	folder 6
Mexico City Field Office Visit -- Background (2 of 2), Jan 2-10, 1997	box 3	folder 7
Madras and New Delhi, India -- Itinerary, Notes, Conference Program, Background Papers (1 of 3), Jan 31-Feb 8, 1997	box 3	folder 8
Madras and New Delhi, India -- Background Papers (2 of 3), Jan 31-Feb 8, 1997	box 4	folder 1
Madras and New Delhi, India -- Ford Program Office Meeting Book (3 of 3), Jan 31-Feb 8, 1997	box 4	folder 2
Trustees Tour of Virginia's Eastern Shore, Northampton County, Virginia, Mar 1997 -- Agenda, Background, Memoranda, Grant Recommendations, 1991-1997	box 4	folder 3
Reproductive Health Worldwide Affinity Group Meeting, Marrakesh, Morocco, Jun 14-19, 1997, Dec 1996-Jun 1997	box 4	folder 4



National Research Council Conference of Ford Fellows, Washington D.C., Oct 17, 1997, Dec 20, 1996-Nov 5, 1997	box 4	folder 5
Natural Resources Affinity Group Meeting, Istanbul, Turkey, Nov 12-16, 1997, Nov-Dec 1997	box 4	folder 6
Brookings Institution Meeting on Community Development Corporations (CDCs), Jan 1998	box 4	folder 7
Beijing Field Office Visit -- Agenda and Background, Mar 1998	box 4	folder 8
Rural Community College Initiative (RCCI) Road Trip, May 11-13, 1998 -- Itinerary, Background, Correspondence, May-Jul 1998	box 4	folder 9
Corporation for Enterprise Development (CFED) Ideas in Development Conference, Washington D.C., Jun 24, 1999, 1998-1999	box 5	folder 1
Visit to the World Bank, 1998-1999	box 5	folder 2
National Center of Strategic Nonprofit Planning and Community Leadership (NPLC) and National Minority AIDS Council (NMAC) Site Visits, Mar 13, 2001, 1998-2001	box 5	folder 3
Children's Defense Fund National Symposium on Arts and Scholarship, Clinton, TN, Mar 19-21, 1999	box 5	folder 4
New School University -- Notes, PowerPoint, Email, Conference Information, Apr 30, 1999	box 5	folder 5
All Africa Program Officers and Representatives Meeting, Zanzibar (1 of 2), Aug 25-Sep 1, 1999	box 5	folder 6
All Africa Program Officers and Representatives Meeting, Zanzibar (2 of 2), Aug 25-Sep 1, 1999	box 5	folder 7
Reproductive Health Affinity Group Annual Meeting, Bahia, Brazil, Oct 9-14, 1999	box 5	folder 8
Ten Point Coalition Visit, Oct 27, 1999, Oct 5-Nov 28, 1999	box 5	folder 9
Development Finance Affinity Group Meeting, London, UK -- Agenda, Notes, PowerPoint, Background, Nov 7-10, 1999	box 6	folder 1
Sustainable Metropolitan Communities Meeting, Jun 27-29, 2000, 1999-2000	box 6	folder 2
Natural Assets Conference -- Agenda, Meeting Book, Background (1 of 2), Jan 2000	box 6	folder 3
Natural Assets Conference -- Meeting Book (2 of 2), Jan 2000	box 6	folder 4
Worldwide Meeting on Youth Involvement, Costa Rica -- Workshop Information (1 of 3), Jan 4-7, 2000	box 6	folder 5
Worldwide Meeting on Youth Involvement, Costa Rica -- Country Profiles A-Q (2 of 3), Jan 4-7, 2000	box 6	folder 6
Worldwide Meeting on Youth Involvement, Costa Rica -- Country Profiles R-Z (3 of 3), Jan 4-7, 2000	box 7	folder 1

Environmental and Development Affinity Group (EDAG) Meeting, Mactan, Philippines -- Agenda Book with Background, Papers, Memoranda (1 of 2), Feb 14-18, 2000	box 7	folder 2
Environmental and Development Affinity Group (EDAG) Meeting, Mactan, Philippines -- Itinerary, PowerPoint, Notes, Case Study (2 of 2), Feb 14-18, 2000	box 7	folder 3
Moscow Field Office Visit (1 of 2), Mar 2000	box 7	folder 4
Moscow Field Office Visit (2 of 2), Mar 2000	box 7	folder 5
Africa and Middle East Rep RAP, Jerusalem -- Briefing Book, Oct 1-6, 2000	box 7	folder 6
"Building Broader Women's Health/Reproductive Healthcare Coalitions in the States" (report) by Terry McGovern, Oct 24, 2000	box 7	folder 7
Chicago/Cleveland Shorebank Site Visits and Cleveland Saves Meeting, Nov 30-Dec 4, 2000	box 7	folder 8
Federation of Southern Cooperative/Land Assistance Fund -- Correspondence and memoranda re: grantee, background, 2000-2001	box 8	folder 1
Reproductive Health Affinity Group Annual Meeting, Cape Town, South Africa, Jan 18-22, 2002, 2000-2002	box 8	folder 2
Vietnam Visit, Jan 8-13, 2001 -- Itinerary, Notes, Memoranda (1 of 3), 2000-2001	box 8	folder 3
Vietnam Visit, Jan 8-13, 2001 -- Briefing Book (2 of 3), Jan 8-13, 2001	box 8	folder 4
Vietnam Visit, Jan 8-13, 2001 -- Briefing Book (3 of 3), Jan 8-13, 2001	box 8	folder 5
Youth Service Workshop, Costa Rica, 2001	box 8	folder 6
Cairo Field Office Visit, Mar 2001	box 8	folder 7
Environmental and Development Affinity Group (EDAG) Meeting, Cape Town, South Africa, Jan 21-25, 2002 -- Program, Schedule, Notes, Email, Oct 18, 2001 - Jan 21, 2002	box 8	folder 8
"Reflections on The Ford Foundation's Role in Building a Global Field of Development Finance and Economic Security" (separated report) by Frank F. DeGiovanni, Feb 20, 2002	box 8	folder 9
Affinity Group on Development Finance and Economic Security Meeting, Beijing, China -- Meeting Book, Agenda, Reports, Background, Feb 26-Mar 3, 2002	box 9	folder 1
Visit to Mexico -- Meeting Book, Agenda, RGAs, May 11-19, 2002	box 9	folder 2
Latin America Regional Program -- Annotated Agenda, Background, Oct 2002	box 9	folder 3

Asia Representatives' Meeting, Hanoi, Vietnam -- Meeting Book, Dec 9-11, 2002	box 9	folder 4
All Africa Program Staff Meeting, Sep 17-20, 2002 -- Agenda, Objectives, Background, Briefing Book, 2002-2003	box 9	folder 5
Corporate Involvement Initiative (CII) Convening, Jun 2-4, 2003 -- Correspondence, Agenda, Background, Mar 24-Jun 2, 2003	box 10	folder 1
Special Initiative on Africa: Senegal (1 of 2), Aug 2004	box 10	folder 2
Special Initiative on Africa: Senegal (2 of 2), Aug 2004	box 10	folder 3

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Research and Writing, 1982-1988

### Scope and Contents

This series consists of two folders. Both pre-date Dr. Oliver's tenure at the Foundation. One contains information retained by Dr. Oliver about his Ford Foundation-funded postdoctoral fellowship administered by the National Science Foundation. The other is an undated paper from the early 1980s containing Dr. Oliver's views on affirmative action.

Title/Description	Instances	
"Is Affirmative Action Necessary? One Sociologist's Viewpoint" by Melvin L. Oliver, early 1980s	box 10	folder 4
National Science Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowship, 1982-1988	box 10	folder 5

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)