

FIELDS OF INTEREST

philanthropic commitment over time. As we have expanded our grantmaking to better address society's pressing issues, each field is gaining strategic focus. Most fully developed is our work in urban revitalization, community health, and climate change and, as such, our Detroit Program (our primary community development effort), Health Program and Environment Program reflect this intentional narrowing of focus and deepening of commitment. Energies are being concentrated in arts and culture, community development at the national level, education, and human services as well and will continue to take shape as the year unfolds.

Arts and Culture

In our unwavering support of arts and culture, the Kresge Foundation has long recognized creative expression as a means to lift the human spirit, spur innovation, and nurture cross-cultural understanding among disparate groups—all integral, essential components of healthy community life. With the intersection of arts and culture and community development becoming an important emerging priority, we seek to support activities and organizations that exhibit strong commitment to civic engagement, access and opportunity for underserved and disadvantaged groups, and programming that is innovative in its substance and delivery.

Kresge's six fields of interest—arts and culture, community development, education, environment, health, and human services—represent a continuous

Community Development: Detroit and National

Our work in community development is twofold. First is the Detroit Program, a comprehensive, five-part, place-based strategy to develop, strengthen and protect the regional economy, downtown city center, area neighborhoods, arts and cultural assets, and the natural and environmental resources—in essence, the economic, social and cultural fabric of the city and region. Second is to serve other older, industrial cities and rural areas, primarily through partnerships with foundations and nonprofit groups, all the while helping to create avenues for collaborative learning and shared knowledge between Detroit, other communities and national urban redevelopment groups.

Education

Access to higher education and pathways for academic success are essential if all citizens are to achieve their full potential, lead productive lives, and contribute to the competitive strength and economic welfare of the country. In the United States, the Education Team funds four-year colleges and universities, community colleges, and early childhood education programs that provide significant access to low-income persons, positively affect local communities, demonstrate a commitment to diversity at all levels, and support environmental sustainability. Internationally, we seek to strengthen South Africa's democracy by supporting its higher education system, an essential anchor for national and continental development.

Environment

Climate change is among the paramount concerns of our time, threatening the vitality of social, economic, and natural systems worldwide. Kresge supports the development of knowledge as well as policy responses and other strategies that aim to lessen the severity of climate change impacts on human and natural communities. We support efforts to reduce harmful greenhouse gas emissions from the built environment, promote the adoption of renewable energy systems, and develop proactive strategies for adapting to unavoidable changes in environmental conditions. We identify and advance innovative solutions and encourage and participate in cross-sector collaborations.

Health

The quality of an individual's health is determined, in large part, by where he or she lives; healthy communities foster the physical and emotional well-being of their residents. The Health Program works in partnership to influence and assist in the creation of safe, healthy communities for underserved populations. Our goals are to reduce the nation's health disparities through fostering healthy lifestyles, promoting strategic improvements in the built and natural environments of vulnerable populations, and strengthening the capacity and quality of community health care services and organizations that serve those populations.

Human Services

The Kresge Foundation believes all members of society deserve to have adequate food, shelter and access to basic human services so that they may lead self-sufficient and productive lives. The current economic crisis has only intensified this belief. The Human Services Team bases its funding decisions on the populations being served by nonprofit organizations—the vulnerable, disadvantaged and low-income—and the quality of care provided. We assist with the support of immediate, basic services as we maintain our ongoing efforts to improve the long-term life circumstances of the nation's poor.