

Governance of Organized Community Philanthropy: Community Foundations and United Ways

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Abstract

The paper examines two models of organized philanthropy, namely community foundations and United Ways, which co-exist and undertake different roles in American society. By examining these two complementary yet competing models, the study analyzes the infrastructure and method of governance of organized community philanthropy in the United States. A typology of organized philanthropy is developed with reference to the ownership of the philanthropic institutions (public or private) and the nature of added benefits created by those institutions. In addition, an institutional model with multiple-level analysis is introduced for making sense of the infrastructure and governance arrangements of the philanthropic sector in American society.

The paper argues that the ultimate goal of community-based philanthropy should be *to bridge the different processes of community building by matching available community resources with participatory problem-solving technique*. Fundraising and endowment building alone are unable to achieve this goal. Comparing a *community-focused* development strategy for promoting local philanthropy with a *donor-focused* strategy, the author concludes that the ideal model of organized community philanthropy is one that can enhance the effectiveness of all other entities involved in the community building process.

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