

2017 Annual Meeting Recap - Project Redwood



Project Redwood Annual Meeting 2017

Let's set the stage....as backdrop, a glorious fall weekend in the Bay Area. The timing... conveniently scheduled to coincide with alumni reunions on campus.

With such perfect staging, it's no surprise that this annual PRW meeting was a wonderful weekend with much accomplished. Twenty-seven Project Redwood members, accompanied by family members and friends, came together on Saturday and Sunday, October 28th and 29th, for two days of meetings and social activity. The gathering provided many opportunities for classmates to reconnect with each other as well as the broader GSB community.

SATURDAY KICK-OFF: Connecting with the GSB Community

Ken Inadomi and Martha Clark, along with Clara Chow, a GSB '13 alum now involved with PRW and a founder of one of our grantee organizations, gave a presentation in the Volunteer Opportunities segment of the fall GSB reunion program attended by over 50 members of multiple classes. They shared an overview of our vision and described the work we do, weaving in the perspective of both PRW members and grantee. Their comments were well received and Ken concluded with a call to action inviting other alum to become involved in PRW.

Representatives from the alumni office were also in attendance. They have continued to show strong interest and support, even inserting a PRW handout card into the packet prepared for every reunion attendee.

While on campus, EarthEnable sponsors Kirk Renaud and Kirk Holmes also met with about a dozen members of the Class of 1987 to talk about continuing that class involvement.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON AND EVENING:

A time for socializing; the venue shifted to San Francisco. Classmate Bob Fisher arranged a fabulous private tour of the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art where his family's collection is exhibited. The tour was followed by a delicious dinner at Palio d'Asti.



Several partners and spouses who enjoyed the SF MOMA Tour

SUNDAY: OFFICIAL MEETING TIME.

Thanks to the hospitality of our financial partner Tides Foundation, the meeting took place in their beautiful Presidio office. A busy agenda combined updates and administrative reviews, strategizing for the future and an afternoon devoted to presentations from several grantees.

Committee reports:

Committee of Sponsors (co-chairs Gail Shulze and Bill Westwood).

- Gail announced that Ann McStay will replace Bill as co-chair for the coming year.
- An excellent handout on useful resources is available to share.
- Citing ongoing ambivalence among PRW members about providing non-financial assistance, there is need to re-emphasize that this work is part of our stated mission and represents a key differentiator for PRW. Clear steps for engaging grantees at various stages would be helpful.
- Two new non-'80 sponsors joined this year. This could be a good entry point for new members who want to work with grantees.

Committee on Evaluation and Impact (co-chairs Amy Minella and Rich Jerdonek)

- Amy announced that Kermit Eck will replace Rich as co-chair.
- A review of final reports for the 2016 grantee projects is just starting.
- The committee could be a good point of entry for new members who want a defined job and not extensive involvement.
- A one-page description of grantee/sponsor interaction should be strengthened and distributed to potential project sponsors.
- A new initiative to document the impact on past grantees was also suggested. By example, Earth Enable and myAgro were both able to apply for large grants leveraging the prestige associated with our Stanford connection. This effort could strongly support the “Why does PRW matter” messaging.

Grant Review Committee (co-chairs Rich Jerdonek and Rick Agresta)

- Jorge Fernandez provided the update for this eight-member committee, describing the grant application and evaluation process thoroughly. He explained how the outcome was reached for each of the eight 2017 grantee organizations.
- Joining this committee is also a good point of entry to understanding PRW. While it entails quite a bit of work, it is very organized and runs smoothly.
- A goal for the next review cycle is stronger coordination with EIC.

Two committees did not make presentations, **Partner Development** (led by Phil Jonckheer) and **Communications** (with Joan Agresta, Susan Miller, DJ Crane and Laura Power). However, both were recognized for their contribution to PRW success.

PRW Relationship with Tides Foundation

Rahul Young, COO of Tides Foundation, gave an informative explanation of Tides' support for its Collective Action Funds, including PRW. Upbeat after hearing about the work of PRW and the results achieved, he said they are committed to encouraging more engagement and coordination between PRW, Tides and other Tides-supported funds.

Strategic Planning for the Future

The last topic of the morning revolved around strategies to drive PRW Expansion. The group enumerated a series of objectives and actions that can become part of our strategy for the future. Here are a few:

- Rebrand PRW beyond a GSB Class of '80 initiative to appeal more broadly to other GSB classes.
 - Maintain a strong class of '80 community even as we pursue growth.
 - Seek more participation from younger classes to sustain the PRW legacy
- In tandem, continue to build our relationship with the GSB so they are willing to endorse PRW as a recognized alumni-wide program.
 - Become an established part of the 25th reunion process with the goal of getting every class to support a PRW project of their own.
- Leverage the collaborative power of PRW/Stanford to help such organizations as Earth Enable and myAgro. Pitch the story as a smart, efficient way to do social philanthropy.
- Continue to build our relationship with Tides to capitalize on their expertise and contacts.

Afternoon: Grantee Presentations

We were fortunate to have a representative of 5 current grantee organizations on hand. Each expressed appreciation for PRW support and then went into highlights of what they are able to accomplish with that support. Their recaps were moving and gratifying; all the more for those PRW members who had not previously met any grantees.

Child Aid was represented by its founder, Nancy Press. Nancy actually flew in from Guatemala to speak with us. Her talk was complemented by comments from sponsor Charlie Baum who participated by phone. Child Aid provides literacy education for indigenous Guatemalan children, an underserved population. Their program has proven effective, and a model for expansion that PRW is supporting also appears to be working. Nancy, in sharing photos of the children in the program focused on their books, brought the program to life in a powerful way.

Christo Rey brought their program director, the work-study director and a very engaging student from the Immaculate Conception Academy, Cristo Rey's high school for girls in SF. All three were excited to present their very successful college prep curriculum and work-study program, and to explain how the software that our grant provided increased the value of work-study students to their employer corporations in San Francisco

Classmate Mo Virani, a board member of **Daraja**, enthusiastically presented the success of the program to educate and empower girls in Kenya. He reported that Daraja has so many applicants and can only afford to accept about 10% of deserving young girls. They are working on a strategic plan for expansion fundraising with help from sponsor Phil Jonckheer so they can expand their class size.

Generation Enterprise was presented by Clara Chow, GSB '13, who is the organization's founder and director. Her initial up-and-down experiences in Nigeria motivated her to come to the GSB to gain knowledge about running her organization. In describing one of the businesses created and run by young people trained by GEN, she clearly showed how Project Redwood's "catalytic capital" made her early work possible. Our funds provided the "risk" capital that supported GEN's growth and paved the way for major funding GEN is receiving now.

The myAgro story was shared by Jane Ullman, GSB '84, and a former board member. She explained how myAgro is expanding beyond Mali to now support small farmers in Senegal thanks in part to PRW grants. She also recognized the value of PRW's GSB/Stanford imprimatur that has led to larger grants from major funding organizations. Such comments further underscore how our impact and influence are invaluable in countless ways.

These discussions were an uplifting wrap to the meeting. Along with more detailed summaries provided on the PRW website, it is obvious that our efforts generate powerful results. There are great stories to share; our challenge is to convey that feeling to current and potential members and donors.

Meeting Wrap

We then had the good fortune to have grantee presenters join the group for a wine and cheese reception. At that time, we thanked out-going Co-chair Donna Allen for her terrific work and welcomed new Co-chair Amy Minella. She will partner with continuing Co-chair Dave Fletcher to lead PRW this year.

The day wrapped with a delicious dinner at a nearby French Bistro where we continued to exchange ideas about continuing and expanding the impact of PRW.

All in all, it was a wonderful weekend. Many thanks to the hard work of Kristi and her team of organizers, Donna, Ed, Mike, Dave and Joan.



Partners and three grantee representatives who attended the annual meeting