AUDACIOUS THINKING

BUILDING A NEW MOVEMENT

OSI-BALTIMORE LAUNCHES THE BALTIMORE JUSTICE FUND
Community Fellows are awarded funding to help fight racial injustice
OSI-BALTIMORE SPOTLIGHT: EVAN SERPICK

OSI-Baltimore welcomes Evan Serpick as the director of strategic communications. He most recently served as the editor of Baltimore’s weekly City Paper, where he expanded the paper’s investigative reporting, web traffic and multi-media content. Serpick has held a range of journalism positions, including correspondent for Entertainment Weekly, associate editor for Rolling Stone and senior editor for Baltimore magazine, and has contributed to The New York Times, The Chronicle of Philanthropy, and The Forward. He is a graduate of Columbia University’s School of General Studies and Graduate School of Journalism.

PICTURED ON FRONT (clockwise from top left): Sarah Tooley, Paige Fitz (center) with students, Lawrence Brown, Lara Law, and Emery “Tre Subira” Whitlow.
Soon after the killing of Freddie Gray, OSI launched a series, AND JUSTICE FOR ALL, on our website, osibaltimore.org, where we’ve posted a variety of perspectives on the significance of the Baltimore Uprising. These posts reflect the anguish—and resolve—of the residents that participated in the uprising, demanding dramatic change in policing, in public investment, and in the policies that, decade after decade, have undercut the freedom, education, health, economic security and wealth of people of color.
LISTENING TO THE VOICES OF THE UPRISING

Like the uprising itself, these voices demand that we listen and seriously reflect on the violence and discrimination that have been a steady part of the African-American experience since slavery.

From Baltimore’s own Ta-Nehisi Coates (“The Case for Reparations,” Atlantic Monthly) to Open Society Foundations Advisory Board member Bryan Stevenson (“Bryan Stevenson on Charleston and Our Real Problem with Race,” The Marshall Project), we have carefully documented accounts of the policies and practices—many initiated or facilitated by government—that not only blocked access to resources (e.g., mortgages) and rights available to whites (e.g., voting) but actually resulted in the loss of liberty (e.g., disproportionate arrests and long sentences) and property (e.g., foreclosures due to targeted marketing of sub-prime loans).

If these issues make you feel unsettled and overwhelmed, you are not alone. As historian and OSI-Baltimore Board member Taylor Branch has noted, an uprising involves the rising up of emotions—anger, frustration and desire—and is uncomfortable for those who are not directly part of the movement.

The release of pent up emotion can be startling to people who, day to day, live fairly segregated lives. And the issues, of course, are deeply upsetting to individuals whose families are directly affected. Nevertheless, this period of turmoil has the potential of provoking not only greater transparency and reflection about our own local history but also real change.

For those in the region who have been privileged, the facts of African-Americans’ past and present-day experience—exposed by smartphones, talented writers and eloquent activists—are generally discordant with the mainstream narrative found in the media, history books, and casual conversation. Breaking out of that old paradigm takes effort.

The mindfulness that we often associate with building a strong and healthy body also is a requirement for building a strong and healthy community. And it all starts with listening and reflection. As our And Justice for All blog posts make clear, there is much to re-learn. Whether it’s a police officer open to community policing, a teacher dedicated to creating a nurturing environment for students, or a politician interested in changing Baltimore’s regional and national reputation, respectful listening can be personally transformative. Implicit biases can have less of a hold on us.

We can have the motivation—and greater understanding of the true measure and harm of racial discrimination—to work to transform the policies and practices that adversely affect so many of our fellow citizens and hold back our region.

The movement that fueled the Baltimore Uprising offers new voices, including voices of young people. And it has galvanized long-term activists, such as the OSI-Baltimore Community Fellows who are helping residents throughout the city to break out of the segregated, low-income, and poorly resourced communities that block talent, hope
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and achievement. These are the voices and actions that can inform our thinking and efforts and help the movement to expand, keeping up the pressure for change.

At OSI-Baltimore, we are supporting this growing movement—providing additional financial support to organizations created by our Community Fellows and helping new activists to build the infrastructure to sustain their efforts.

And, thanks to contributions from many of you to our Baltimore Justice Fund, we are also supporting organizations with the expertise (in fields such as policing reform and accountability, alternatives to incarceration, civic engagement, and youth employment) to design policies and practices that are non-discriminatory and focused on building communities that are opportunity-rich, healthy and safe.

But each of us has a role to play—listening, learning and adding our own voice to the movement calling for policies and practices that are just and designed to help all residents succeed. The uprising was a call to each of us. Let’s respond and keep up the pressure for change that benefits us all.
Mary Jo and Ted Wiese are passionate about giving people who are struggling better opportunities to build better lives. They are supporters of Open Society Institute-Baltimore and contributed generously to the Baltimore Justice Fund, created after the uprising in the spring. They also spend time providing hands-on support to people on the margins—adults in prison or a homeless shelter, or children from low-income communities trying to succeed in school.
Mary Jo Wiese, a lecturer in academic writing at Goucher College, helped launch a program providing college-level classes to inmates at two state prisons (which received support from Open Society Foundations) and has been closely involved with the Saint Ignatius Loyola Academy, which serves middle-school boys from low-income Baltimore families.

Ted Wiese, the Head of Fixed Income at T. Rowe Price, has been involved for a decade with the Helping Up Mission, a shelter and service center in East Baltimore that serves hundreds of men. They have two sons and live in Baltimore County.

Q. What guides your work in the community?

T. We were both raised by parents who valued service to the community. That was instilled in us from a very early age. We support a number of initiatives, but the ones that really matter to us are the ones that address fundamental human issues.

Q. How can Baltimore do a better job of helping people who are struggling to build better lives?

T. The biggest obstacle people often face is getting into the workplace. You have this permanently dependent class of people who are trapped in poverty, mental illness, addiction, or homelessness. It’s also a major problem for people who leave incarceration with a felony and find out it’s almost impossible to get a job. One of their biggest hurdles is getting back into the legitimate economy.

M. J. When people leave jail, they face profound obstacles. Some of the women I have taught have returned to very supportive families, but they often don’t have much money, and they often don’t have transportation. So they struggle to find jobs or enroll in college. We also have such a punitive society; there needs to be a change in society’s mindset. These people need to be recognized as part of our community. They have so much to contribute.

Q. Why did you contribute to the Baltimore Justice Fund?

M. J. OSI addresses some of the hardest challenges. A lot of people are willing to only go after the low-hanging fruit, but OSI is willing to risk not succeeding. OSI challenges assumptions, and they spend time listening to the stakeholders before they try to address a problem.

T. OSI is an organization willing to pose the toughest questions and is more likely than other organizations to get in the system’s face and question the current approaches. We support OSI financially because it puts boots on the ground and is willing to tackle challenges in different, creative ways. OSI tackles some of the most difficult issues that are really important to bringing about social change. It goes back to our values of social justice. OSI works on a problem in a way that’s not just about throwing money at it.

Q. What was your reaction to the unrest in Baltimore?

M. J. Of course, I was horrified and really saddened. But a couple of my favorite Goucher students came in to talk about the experience of nonviolent protesting. They radiated commitment. They were willing to risk being jailed; they wrote their lawyers’ numbers on their arms in Sharpie. I started thinking, maybe this is the kind of creative tension that brings about real change.

There is an understanding on both sides of the political spectrum that we need to rethink some of our criminal justice policies, and there is some movement there, which is energizing. An organization like OSI can keep that dialogue going.

Q. What would you like to see happen in Baltimore?

T. I’d like to see more business investment in Baltimore. It takes wealthy individuals or companies that can coalesce around the goal of making the community better. I see many young people choosing to live in the city. I would like them to have more reasons to stay in the city and raise their families there. Finally, we as a city need to do more to support marginalized communities. That includes reducing arrests and imprisonment.

M. J. I would love to see Baltimore transition into a place where people pioneer innovative social programs and succeed. The whole question of how we provide social mobility to people with limited opportunities—that is a really challenging question. Very few people have found a formula that works. I’d like to see Baltimore lead the way.

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When a minor is arrested and charged with a serious crime in Maryland, the general policy for years has been to hold the youth in adult jail while awaiting trial or until a court hearing on whether to remand the case back into juvenile court. This puts young people at risk, deprives them of needed services and disrupts their lives—even before they have had their cases adjudicated. But as of October 1, a new state law will, in most cases, end the practice of holding in adult jails young people ages 14 to 17 who have been charged as adults.

General Assembly passage of the legislation this year was due to the education and advocacy efforts of the Baltimore nonprofit Community Law in Action (CLIA), an OSI grantee, and its partners. The Just Kids Campaign, an initiative led by CLIA that trains young people to be advocates, and its allies made a strong case for keeping young people in juvenile facilities while awaiting trial. They stressed the need to give young people appropriate mental health and educational services while they are awaiting trial—services that are offered in secure juvenile facilities but rarely in adult jails.

The advocates also focused on the fact that young people in adult jails are often held in either solitary confinement or mental harm. Finally, research has shown that holding a juvenile in an adult jail increases the likelihood that he or she will return to the criminal justice system.

"With this new law, Maryland will affirm what we know about youth justice and adolescent brain science," said Tara Huffman, OSI-Baltimore’s Director of Criminal and Juvenile Justice. “Youth charged with serious offenses demand a response that does no further harm to them or others, and that capitalizes on their amenability to age-appropriate treatment and other services. Adult jails do the exact opposite, so youth simply don’t belong there."

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VICTORY:
MINORS AWAITING TRIAL NO LONGER SENT TO ADULT JAIL
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Kara Aanenson, CLIA’s director of advocacy, says youth are put in harm’s way in adult jails because very few of them are separated from adult inmates. “And they don’t have access to education,” Aaneson said. “The better alternative is to detain them in juvenile facilities, where they can receive those services and be more likely to come back to their communities and have a different life than they would have after being held in adult facilities.”

An important goal was to remind policymakers that the youth awaiting trial have not been convicted. “We’re talking about young people who are only accused of crimes,” Aanenson said. “I think people’s bias is that, if you’re accused of something, you did it. It was a matter of educating policymakers that that’s not the case.”

Two years ago, the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services, as a result of advocacy by OSI-Baltimore and its grantees and partners, implemented a policy of holding qualified Baltimore City juveniles who have been charged as adults in juvenile facilities, rather than in the city’s adult pre-trial detention center. The new law now expands that policy statewide.

In certain cases, youth can still be held in adult facilities before trial. A youth can be held in an adult facility if there is no space at a juvenile detention center or if a judge finds that detention in a secure juvenile facility would pose a risk to the youth or others.

The Just Kids Campaign trains young people and families with experience in the criminal justice system to become advocates for change. Passage of the law follows a series of earlier successes for CLIA and the Just Kids Campaign, including a successful effort to halt the planned construction of a major new juvenile jail in Baltimore.

With passage of this year’s legislation, CLIA and the Just Kids Campaign are focused on a larger goal. “We’re looking forward to next year when we’ll push for policy reform that requires that every young person who is charged begins his or her case in the juvenile justice system. We’re saying: no matter what you’re charged with, the case would originate in the juvenile court,” Aanenson said.

“We can show that these kids are no different than anyone else and they should begin their cases in the juvenile system and have the prosecutor, is he or she deems it necessary, file a petition to move the case to adult court.”

Another Win for Criminal Justice Advocates!

In July, Maryland Governor Larry Hogan announced the closure of the dilapidated Baltimore City Detention Center, Baltimore’s oldest jail. The jail was notorious for its unsafe and unhealthy conditions, including infrastructure dating back to the Civil War.

OSI-Baltimore and our partners, including the Public Justice Center, have long called for its closure. Calling the jail “deplorable,” Hogan announced the men’s facility would be permanently closed and said the inmates would be immediately moved to other, more modern facilities.
In the days after Freddie Gray died in police custody, protesters took to the streets to demand justice. The city watched as protests grew louder, bigger and more insistent. Confrontations between police and protesters drew attention from national media that were only too happy to seize on the incidents of looting and arson that broke out on April 27. But the unfortunate violence did not reflect the broader push for change, what we at OSI-Baltimore and others refer to as an “uprising”—a rising up or public stand against government policies and practices.

Sparked by Gray’s death, the uprising was about police brutality, the lack of opportunity, a broken criminal justice system, under-resourced neighborhoods and schools, implicit bias and injustice. In our 17 years working in this city, we’ve invested in Sandtown, where Freddie Gray lived, and the many struggling Baltimore communities like it. So, although the destruction that occurred was disappointing, none of us here were surprised that it happened. “The deep distress of so many Baltimore residents as well as the frustration and lack of hope that led to property destruction were very sad to see so vividly, but it wasn’t shocking to us,” said OSI-Baltimore director Diana Morris. “As long as we have been in Baltimore, our focus has been on those same underlying, systemic issues that led to the uprising—and they all relate to injustice.”
That’s why, following the unrest in the city, OSI-Baltimore took time to think through its strategy, adjusting and refining past approaches and looking for new opportunities that emerged from the uprising. Drawing from national colleagues’ experience in Ferguson, New York City, and Cincinnati, OSI-Baltimore is now executing some key aspects of an expanded approach.

“Our strategy is layered,” said Program Director of Criminal and Juvenile Justice Tara Huffman, “because we recognize that, if we don’t address the systemic issues, there will be one Freddie Gray after another. We want to stop that destructive cycle.” An initial step was to launch the Baltimore Justice Fund. The fund supports focused interventions to improve police accountability and police-community relationships, to reduce the number of Baltimoreans caught up in the criminal justice system, and to engage Marylanders, especially young people, in advocacy for programs and policies to increase opportunity and racial justice.

“Such a fund is a perfect fit for us,” explained Morris, “because our Criminal and Juvenile Justice program is dedicated to addressing the root causes of inequities and harmful policies and practices in Baltimore that became broadly apparent with Freddie Gray’s killing.”

The fund and its purpose quickly resonated with Baltimore and Maryland residents, as well as people from other cities and countries. Including money raised during a surprise benefit concert by Prince—and a match from rapper Jay-Z’s music streaming service Tidal—the Baltimore Justice Fund has now raised nearly $800,000 and continues to seek contributions. Appeals to loyal OSI-Baltimore donors and new donors have been successful, providing the resources to work strategically.

“There are several things that the uprising highlighted, and one of them was that police-community relations are broken,” Morris said. “That has huge implications for public safety—including in low-income communities—as well as for the protection of citizens’ basic rights. The good news is that there is now wide acknowledgment that something had to change.”

After careful consideration and discussions with partners, grassroots leaders, and colleagues, OSI-Baltimore has begun awarding grants to help bring about that change—and will continue to do so in the coming months.

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The early grants build on resources that OSI-Baltimore strategically built over the years. The awards to alumni fellows’ organizations, for example, amplify the investment OSI-Baltimore made when originally funding each of the 11 Community Fellows as fledgling social entrepreneurs. And they provide a means to place funds immediately in the communities where they are most needed. The organizations were chosen because they now have a track record of success and the capacity to expand their work but also because, over the years, they have earned respect and legitimacy in the communities in which they work.

The grantees reflect the long-term value of investing in a network of talented and dedicated fellows. Support to the Baltimore Action Legal Committee recognizes that demonstrations are likely to be ongoing as the trial of the six officers charged in Freddie Gray’s death and the Department of Justice pattern and practice investigation into the Baltimore Police Department proceed. The committee comprises volunteer attorneys who quickly banded together to provide training for protesters, act as “watchers” during the days of peaceful protesting, and provide pro bono legal representation to those who were arrested. OSI-Baltimore support will allow their work to continue.

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OSI-Baltimore is also redoubling efforts to capitalize on grants it made in the years leading up to Freddie Gray’s death.

Last year, for example, it gave the Center for Policing Equity $125,000 to work with the Baltimore City Police Department to identify where implicit bias is affecting officers’ police work and to develop and assess the impact of a training curriculum in response. The Center has worked successfully with 41 jurisdictions across the nation and has already begun to develop interventions to help city police gain the knowledge and skills to address implicit bias that compromises their work.

In 2013, OSI-Baltimore started partnering with the Ingoma Foundation to work with youth in East Baltimore to develop their
Eleven of the first thirteen Baltimore Justice Fund grants went to organizations founded by OSI-Baltimore Community Fellows, whose work has been especially responsive to urgent needs identified by the community. The awardees are:

ANNE KOTLEBA (Class of 2012)
Baltimore United Viewfinders is using art as a channel for youth and community voices and activism as well as job creation.

JACQUELINE ROBARGE (Class of 2002)
Power Inside is organizing around improving police accountability, reducing the number of citizens caught up in the criminal justice system and increasing trauma support and training to residents.

SARAH TOOLEY (Class of 2010)
901 Arts is using art as an advocacy tool to engage vulnerable youth in constructive activities during after-school hours.

LARA LAW (Class of 2011)
Youth Empowered Society (YES) Drop-In Center is providing trauma-informed services, peer support and advocacy training to homeless youth.

ANTOINE BENNETT (Class of 2012)
Men of Valuable Action is working with previously incarcerated men in the Sandtown-Winchester community to reduce recidivism, encourage educational and career goals, promote family stability, and support civic and community engagement.

WANDA BEST (Class of 2001)
Upton Planning Committee is engaging youth in the Upton community to address food security and community health issues.

PAIGE FITZ (Class of 2007)
Young Life GEMS is fostering nurturing mentor relationships that encourage emotional well-being and community engagement for girls ages 12-18 in the Sandtown-Winchester community.

JESSICA LEWIS (Class of 2013)
Right to Housing Alliance is organizing around two systemic issues: police violence and economic disinvestment.

REBECCA YENAWINE (Class of 1999)
New Lens is using media as an advocacy tool to engage youth in addressing the issue of improving police and community relations.

LAWRENCE BROWN (Class of 2012)
You're the Quarterback is helping men navigate legal and employment barriers in order to decrease involvement in the criminal justice system.

EMERY “TRE SUBIRA” WHITLOW (Class of 2009)
Afrikan Youth Alchemy, Inc. is empowering youth through media advocacy, cultural exploration, and entrepreneurship.

leadership capacity and improve relations between youth and police. The two groups worked to share—and get past—stereotypes that each held of each other and produced a training curriculum that is informed by both young people and police.

“What we’ve found is that our grantees were highlighting the systemic and structural racism and inequities that conspired to create the uprising,” Huffman said. “What we needed to do was amplify and expand our grant-making to support those doing the most effective work. And that’s what we’re doing.”

Huffman also has been reaching out to younger, and often less well-known, groups and individuals, to ensure the next generation of leaders is heard and incorporated into the change agenda. That kind of outreach is just one positive outcome of the uprising. There are many others. For example, the U.S. Department of Justice investigation into Baltimore City’s policing practices provides an opportunity for the community to provide important information, contribute to recommendations and later remain engaged in monitoring any agreements.

OSI-Baltimore stands ready to help the community with that process. It is also exploring other mechanisms to allow the community to hold the police accountable. Perhaps most importantly, in the wake of
Freddie Gray’s death, agencies, business leaders, elected officials, community members and others now are more willing to discuss and tackle the systemic issues that are priorities of OSI-Baltimore. Philanthropies are coming together regularly to pool their expertise. In every corner of Baltimore, people are increasingly willing to get to the root of the problems that have long plagued the city and find new ways to bring about real change. “The equitable and respectful practices and the fair and constructive use of public funds are not just imperative to the well-being of every city resident,” Diana Morris said, “but really to the reputation and prosperity of the region.”

**AFTER THE UPRISING...**

**PAMELA KING**  
Director of Community Fellowships and Initiatives:  
“I was encouraged by the increased desire by many people for a Baltimore that is inclusive and that responds to the citizens who most need our help. Because of the unrest, I feel like people are listening, they’re paying attention now. People have realized that the challenges faced by people in marginalized communities are not contained—they impact everybody in one way or another.”

**TARA HUFFMAN**  
Director of Criminal and Juvenile Justice:  
“I reached out to the people and groups on the ground organizing the peaceful protests and acts of civil disobedience. I invited them into the office for face-to-face conversations. Some of them were people we’ve funded; others were more distant. I wanted to make sure we knew who was out there, who was doing the work, and what kind of resources were needed to help. We are using those conversations to develop a working relationship with many of them, because we understand that this next generation is going to be the one to shape the agenda. At the end of the day, the agenda is going to come from the community.”

**KAREN WEBBER**  
Director of Education and Youth Development:  
“Watching the children who participated in violence during the protests, I felt sad about the all the things that should have been in place for them that were not—training for educators on trauma, violence and poverty that had not been held, and positive interventions such as restorative practices that were in place in only a handful of schools. I regretted that we had not provided our children with a safe space for them to work through their daily frustrations, fears and disappointments. As a community, we can and should do better.”

**SCOTT NOLEN**  
Director of Drug Addiction Treatment:  
“I was most encouraged by the way that local and national partners, both private and government, came to the table—not solely to talk about community-police relations but with an understanding of all the ways these communities have been neglected, and how that neglect contributed to the frustration that was expressed in Baltimore’s streets. The Drug Addiction Treatment program has redoubled its efforts to address the root causes of inequality, including the lack of access to healthcare, that hinder our citizens from reaching their full potential.”
Since launching the Community Fellowships Program in 1998, OSI-Baltimore has invested in more than 160 “social entrepreneurs,” individuals with ambitious ideas about how to make a difference in under-served segments of the city. A majority of the grassroots projects we funded are still thriving. Many have become full-fledged non-profits in their own right.

And nearly every policy and advocacy area one can imagine has been touched by a fellow, including juvenile justice, conflict resolution, civil liberties and legal rights, health and human services, addiction treatment, education, environmental causes, food deserts and urban farming, homelessness, community art/community building, media literacy, black male achievement and peer-to-peer learning. Throughout the course of these projects over the years, fellows have anecdotally conveyed their triumphs and, in particular, the synergies and successes that come from being connected to the growing network of OSI-Baltimore’s fellows. But what is the true impact of the Community Fellowships?
OSI-Baltimore hired experts in network analysis to document and assess the scope and impact of the Community Fellows’ work and the reach of the fellows into the social justice community in Baltimore. “The program is in its 18th year. It’s timely for us to check in with the community to see what its view is of the program” said Pamela King, director of OSI-Baltimore’s Community Fellowships and Initiatives.

“We also wanted to talk with the fellows themselves about how they’ve benefited from the opportunity, from being part of a community of other like-minded individuals. We believe that the study findings will help us to strengthen the program and help the fellows to use the network better so they have greater impact.”

Marianne Hughes, founder and former executive director of the Interaction Institute for Social Change, conducts network analyses for organizations across the country. Hughes and her team spent nearly six weeks interviewing 20 current and former fellows, OSI-Baltimore board members and staff, and city stakeholders, such as Cheryl Casciani, director of Neighborhood Sustainability at the Baltimore Community Foundation; Fred Lazarus, president emeritus at Maryland Institute College of Art; and Donald Manekin, founding member and senior vice-president at Seawall Development Company, among others. Hughes also surveyed a larger pool of past and present fellows and queried them about their work.

The answers she received were impressive. Of the 86 surveyed, more than half still are working in the same area or even on the same project we initially funded. Some were investing their time in different projects, but still in the social justice arena.

“In fact, all of those surveyed said they were still working to expand social justice,” King said. “That speaks to the passion and commitment of the individuals we select to be fellows. The study also showed that they still feel a connection to OSI-Baltimore, which helped them get started in the right way.”

The network analysis resulted in two important products: a white paper and a mapping tool. The white paper, King said, primarily will help OSI-Baltimore better share the finer points of the Fellowships program’s impact and untapped potential with partners and the public. The paper revealed, for example, that city stakeholders strongly believe OSI fellows are replenishing and diversifying Baltimore’s leadership pipeline, and are bringing essential services to under-served populations. “OSI is a powerful incubator and network, lifting up city life with visible work at the grassroots,” said City Councilwoman Mary Pat Clarke.

“My bias is keeping passionate people here and empowering them,” Fred Lazarus said. “Most fellows stay in the city and stay engaged, moving the city forward in areas of social justice.”

King said the white paper also was important for revealing what the fellows value in the program, “such as the fellows’ newsletter and listserv, the regular fellows gatherings, and the interactions with staff.” The white paper highlighted how important OSI’s recognition and support are to helping new social entrepreneurs get started on their projects.

“We believe that the study findings will help us to strengthen the program and help the fellows to use the opportunity better so they have greater impact.”
Since becoming fellows, they now have an average of 17 connections among the network. “Each individual fellow is talented, innovative and a dynamic change agent in the community in which he or she works. But the collective network of fellows is an even more valuable asset for Baltimore. The network analysis has given us and the fellows a valuable snapshot of how the network is now working—the kind of collaboration that extends the scope and impact of each individual,” said OSI-Baltimore director Diana Morris.

“And now the fellows and we can take the valuable findings and recommendations of the network experts we engaged to intensify the connections among the fellows so that they can tap more resources, work more efficiently, and have greater impact.”

Among the sentiments fellows expressed:

- The public credibility conferred by an OSI fellowship is a blessing.
- The fellowship stipend is “essential,” providing the “gift of time” and the flexibility to fertilize ideas and grow projects.
- The coaching by King provides a “deep well of wisdom,” as well as access to OSI program directors and other new relationships.

In addition, the mapping tool Hughes presented is an impressive set of images, showing how the network has grown, where fellows’ work overlaps and how the fellows are connected. One map shows, for example, that, on average, each fellow had connections to four other fellows before their fellowship.
OSI-Baltimore donors gathered at the home of Chip and Rhona Wendler for a reception and discussion with Dr. Leana Wen, Baltimore’s dynamic new health commissioner, who is fighting for health equity and social justice in our city.
OPEN SOCIETY INSTITUTE-BALTIMORE focuses on the root causes of three intertwined problems in our city and state: drug addiction, an over-reliance on incarceration, and obstacles that impede youth in succeeding inside and out of the classroom. We also support a growing corps of social entrepreneurs committed to under-served populations in Baltimore. Before we make a single grant, we analyze the root causes of a problem, cull research and examine current practices. Because we aim for lasting sustainable solutions, we engage public and private partners from the start. It is only then, with a clear picture of the problem, that we begin to focus our approach and diligently craft a roadmap for change.

Anne Kotleba, a 2012 Community Fellow, started the Baltimore United Viewfinders with a friend, as a way to give young people in East Baltimore a means to find their voices and communicate their unique points-of-view. At first, Kotleba spent much of her time teaching her students the mechanics of photography: lenses, shutter speeds, exposure, lighting. "We were like, 'Let's learn the medium,'" she says. 'But now they're older, and they're so interesting! We're having these amazing conversations, and I can see their growth as human beings and in their ability to think critically. Now, they're saying to me, 'Let's take this medium and say something with it.'"

See the rest of this photo essay at osibaltimore.org.