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Cover: Courtesy of Koreatown Youth and Community Center
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For twenty five years, The Eisner Foundation has been committed to providing access and opportunity to Southern California’s most vulnerable citizens. We have found over time through research and practice that the programs that worked the best were those that served children and older adults together, creating positive outcomes not only for both, but for our community and our society. Today, The Eisner Foundation is America’s only foundation focused exclusively on intergenerational programs.

In 2021, America continued unfortunately to face unprecedented challenges and those that we seek to serve were obviously at great risk. Still, I was very proud that The Eisner Foundation was able to provide support to those who were working on the frontlines to protect our elderly, educate our children, unite our citizenry, and vaccinate as many people as possible. While our country continues to be divided along many lines, it was comforting that many of the seniors and children that our partners serve were able to find common ground, and identify their own shared purposes and visions, for themselves and their communities.

I love all of our grantees at The Eisner Foundation, and am so proud of the work they do, but I was especially thrilled this year by our ability to partner with Heart of Los Angeles to create Southern California’s first intergenerational orchestra. Music is one of the loves of our family, and to see the people of HOLA come together across generations to create such amazing harmonies, it warmed our hearts and reaffirmed our belief that we have more in common than we are sometimes led to believe. I look forward to hearing more beautiful music from the intergenerational orchestra, and to see how all our the partners can come together for the enrichment of not only each other, but Los Angeles as a whole.

The Eisner Foundation is pleased to continue our work in this intergenerational ecosystem. We invite you to join us, and hope you will take the time today to learn about what we have learned and what is ahead. Thank you.

Jane B. Eisner, President, The Eisner Foundation

2021 was unfortunately another difficult year. Despite unprecedented scientific achievements, our community and our country felt vulnerable, divided, and at great risk. It was challenging, but I have never been more honored to have the opportunity to lead The Eisner Foundation. Every day, our staff, despite not being able to visit any of our partners in person, did all they could to identify, support, and advocate on behalf of great non-profits that believe, as we do, that our nation is strongest when we support all generations and do what we can to bring them together. I am again thankful to the Eisner family for their vision in identifying this unheralded focus, and their willingness to commit great resources to addressing the inequities that threaten our society when we fail to create a bond between the young and the old.

At our organization, we believe we have a duty as a funder and a thought leader to seek the highest ground, and to work to unite people from different generations. In 2021, while our community, our country, and our world were still very much under siege, we stayed focused on finding ways to end the divide between those generations. Some progress was made, under difficult circumstances, and it was wonderful, but there is much more to do. We so very much look forward to 2022 and continuing our work to unite. I still believe that great days lie ahead, as long as there are people like our grantees, who toil with great dignity to create a better future for all. We will be there for them.

Trent Stamp, CEO, The Eisner Foundation
As the Covid-19 pandemic continued in 2021, the importance of human connection was ever more apparent. The loneliness and isolation many felt in the first year of the crisis gave way to joyful reunions as vaccines became available, though uncertainty continues to loom. Through it all, communities have leveraged new ideas and technologies to bring people together. The Eisner Foundation has been proud to support this creativity and resilience in the past year.

In 2021, The Eisner Foundation invested almost eight million dollars in organizations working in Los Angeles County and beyond to bring people together, break down generational silos, and make our communities stronger. Spanning a range of sectors including the arts, education, kin care, and more, these grants created exponential impact as intergenerational program participants were not simply served, but served each other while building lasting bonds.

The past year has shown both the increasing divisions in our country and our capacity to overcome them. Our grantee partners have demonstrated not only their own continued adaptability and resourcefulness, but also that of the communities in which they work. And as they strive to further intergenerational connections and bridge divides, The Eisner Foundation will be there to support them.
$7,511,753
Granted in 2021
The Covid-19 vaccination effort relied heavily on nonprofit organizations in Los Angeles in 2021. From sharing information to administering vaccines, our grantees stepped up as vital partners in the race to vaccinate vulnerable populations.

These organizations are trusted members of their communities, and places where individuals go for reliable information. This has been particularly important for groups who primarily speak languages other than English. Koreatown Youth and Community Center (KYCC), Little Tokyo Service Center, and the Southeast Asian Community Alliance (SEACA) all worked to share essential details with their constituents about the vaccine’s safety and efficacy, secure appointments, and combat disinformation in multiple languages.

Some organizations like St. Barnabas Senior Services and the LGBTQ Center of Long Beach particularly focused on securing appointments for older adults—a major challenge for those without internet access. Others, like ONEgeneration and Little Tokyo Service Center leveraged connections in healthcare to host clinics and vaccinate older adults at familiar, trusted locations. The Motion Picture and Television Fund (MPTF) held webinars and shared information with the entertainment community while providing the vaccine to campus residents, staff, and volunteers.

Our partners in healthcare also played a vital role. Clinics at the Los Angeles LGBT Center, Eisner Health, and Venice Family Clinic administered the vaccine to their patients while advocating for additional supply. For older adults without access to the internet or a car for a vaccination appointment at drive-through hubs, community clinics were essential to reaching older adults equitably.

These organizations are bringing hope to the communities they serve, and will continue to be crucial partners as Los Angeles emerges from this crisis.
In August 2021, our partners at Eisner Health rolled out a new Mobile Vax Van, supported by a $400,000 grant from The Eisner Foundation. The van visited critical locations across Los Angeles with outreach teams and provided Covid-19 vaccines, information on vaccines and Eisner Health services, and give away items including hand sanitizer, healthy snacks, masks, and school supplies.

Long-term, the van will also serve as a mobile health center throughout Los Angeles County, addressing a range of health needs to support homebound patients, and administer vaccines and vaccine education in partnership with various local community organizations and government agencies.

Eisner Health operates in low-income communities of color in Los Angeles that have been disproportionately affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. Their patients include a high proportion of residents working in essential jobs, living in multigenerational households, and with health concerns—all of which have led to higher rates of infections and deaths. By increasing their capacity to vaccinate these populations, Eisner Health will challenge the inequities that have led to these outcomes.
After a year-long delay due to Covid-19, Heart of Los Angeles (HOLA) launched their new Intergenerational Orchestra in August 2021. Conceived as an opportunity to expand HOLA’s robust youth music program to the broader community, the Intergenerational Orchestra brings together Angelenos from a wide range of age, ethnic, and socioeconomic backgrounds over a love of music. As they learn and perform together, they are also getting to know each other as friends, neighbors, and fellow musicians.

Daniel Suk, the Intergenerational Orchestra Artistic Director, is designing the orchestra’s repertoire to celebrate the diversity of its members. In addition to more traditional orchestral selections, they’re also learning modern music and music from different cultures.

Following a highly successful Holiday Concert in early December, the HOLA Intergenerational Orchestra has great momentum with its more than 100 members, and looks forward to a robust 2022 performance schedule.
The Covid-19 pandemic has been challenging for all, and most certainly for grandparents who serve as the primary caregivers for their grandchildren. At Grandparents As Parents (GAP), a program of ONEgeneration, they’ve faced challenges too: moving their support groups online, familiarizing participants with Zoom, and getting grandfamilies the resources they need amid great uncertainty.

But in July 2021, GAP staff brought a bit of normalcy to the families they serve by organizing a camping trip at Malibu Creek State Park. For most, it was their first time camping, and some families hadn’t been anywhere since the beginning of the pandemic.

One of GAP’s goals is to provide experiences that the families wouldn’t do on their own, whether it’s due to the caregiver’s age, their financial situation, or health. Camping was an opportunity GAP identified, and the staff provided all the food and did the cooking, helped set up tents, and planned activities to reduce as many barriers to participation as possible.

In the Fall of 2021, GAP resumed in-person support groups, and established new partnerships with Lancaster School District and Inglewood School District to host support groups and workshops for kinship caregivers. However, after seeing how online meetings increased access to some grandparents, GAP will continue to maintain online groups as well.
Particularly at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, many organizations found themselves training their volunteers in new platforms and other tech tools to shift their program delivery online. While older volunteers can be stereotyped as tech-averse, many of our partners found that their older volunteers were eager to learn so they could continue serving their communities.

Reading Partners Los Angeles, which matches tutors with elementary students who need literacy help, certainly found this to be the case. As they shifted many of their students to their Reading Partners Connects online program, tutors like Nancy Carlson shifted as well—noting that if she expected her students to try to learn new things, she should learn new things herself.

At first, Nancy was concerned about losing the personal interaction and insights she'd experienced tutoring students in a dedicated Reading Partners classroom at F. D. Roosevelt Elementary. But as she became familiar with the new platform, she found that she could still develop strong relationships with students online.

In fact, in many ways, these online experiences are more convenient and comfortable for many volunteers. Without having to commute to a location or sit at child-sized tables, volunteers of all ages are still finding purpose and joy in helping students with Reading Partners Connects.
Sages & Seekers brings together cohorts of older adults and students, and pairs them up to build deep relationships. This 8-week program is used in schools and community centers across the country.

But since the Covid-19 pandemic began, the program has shifted to Zoom. While some elements of the group gatherings now feel different, older adults and students are still relishing the opportunity to engage one-on-one. And because of the online shift, participants from all over the country can interact in new ways.

But the core of the program remains the same. Each week builds on the week before, engaging both generations in dialogue that leads to authentic conversation. This exchange culminates in a Tribute written by the Seeker, then read to the Sage in a group setting, offering both writing and public speaking experience.

Over time, participants come to see what they have in common rather than their differences—and begin to break down stereotypes and ageism in both directions.
In November 2021, The Eisner Foundation named the Institute for Empowered Aging at United Neighborhood Houses (UNH) the winner of the 2021 Eisner Prize for Intergenerational Excellence. The prize came with a $250,000 award in recognition of the Institute’s work empowering older people and positioning them as community builders, community catalysts, and change agents for the greater good.

The Foundation also announced a new grantmaking effort in New York City, where in 2022 it will allocate a minimum of $1 million in new grants to New York-based organizations uniting multiple generations for mutual benefit.

The Eisner Foundation has honored a wide range of individuals and nonprofits with The Eisner Prize since it was first awarded to Nancy Henkin and the Temple University Intergenerational Center in 2011. Other previous winners include ARECMA in Puerto Rico, Generations United in Washington, D.C., Bridge Meadows in Portland, and Encore.org in San Francisco. While The Eisner Foundation’s grantmaking has historically been focused in Los Angeles County, The Eisner Prize is designed to recognize exceptional intergenerational models across the United States.

The Eisner Foundation celebrated the Institute for Empowered Aging’s work and its grantmaking expansion during a virtual event on December 8, 2021, featuring Michael and Jane Eisner, an in-depth look into the Institute’s work with UNH’s member settlement houses, and an overview of the foundation’s New York City grantmaking process.
The Institute for Empowered Aging at United Neighborhood Houses develops innovative practices, advocacy campaigns, research, and tools that promote neighborhood initiatives centered on and powered by older people. Knowing that the number of older adults in the U.S. is rapidly growing, the Institute co-creates self-directed teams where older community members can identify and address local issues they care about in partnership with community members of all ages. Many of the teams across New York emphasize intergenerational connections in their efforts.

United Neighborhood Houses is a policy and social change organization representing 45 neighborhood settlement houses that reach 765,000 New Yorkers from all walks of life. A progressive leader for more than 100 years, they mobilize their members and their communities to advocate for good public policies and promote strong organizations and practices that keep neighborhoods resilient and thriving for all New Yorkers. UNH leads advocacy and partners with members on a broad range of issues including civic and community engagement, neighborhood affordability, healthy aging, early childhood education, adult literacy, and youth development, with customized professional development and peer learning to build the skills and leadership capabilities of settlement house staff at all levels.
The United States began the 20th century as one of the most age-integrated societies in the world, and ended it as one of the most age-segregated. As Americans live longer lives, this restructuring has led to a range of social problems, including wasted human potential, deeply rooted ageism, and widespread loneliness.

This challenge has massive implications for the social sector and the future health of our society at large. In March 2021, the Stanford Social Innovation Review, an award-winning and influential magazine and website, launched “Meeting the Multigenerational Moment,” a series of 13 essays reflecting on age segregation in American society and the intergenerational solutions that could reduce it.

Published in partnership with Encore.org and The Eisner Foundation, the series shone a light on some of the most promising innovations bringing older and younger people together to solve some of our most pressing problems.

Encore.org CEO Marc Freedman and Eisner Foundation CEO Trent Stamp authored the first essay in the series, “Overcoming Age Segregation.” While explaining how we became so divided, they called on social innovators to “be as creative in bringing people together across ages as we’ve been about splitting them apart.”
The other essays—written by a mix of social entrepreneurs, academic researchers, and philanthropic leaders, including many Eisner Foundation grantees and partners—focused on intergenerational strategies to help meet critical needs in affordable housing, K-3 literacy, mentoring, support for foster families, connection, funding, and more. They show how fresh thinking and new social arrangements hold the potential to make the most of an increasingly multigenerational society.

As the United States becomes a country with more individuals over 60 than under 18 for the first time in history, this series demonstrates the need to alleviate the problems created by age segregation, and realize the benefits of greater cross-generational engagement and interdependence.

Fortunately, as this series shows, a movement to bridge generational divides is already underway.
In addition to our partnership with the Stanford Social Innovation Review and the expert contributors to the “Meeting the Multigenerational Moment” series, The Eisner Foundation was highly committed to supporting new research and tools to advance intergenerational efforts in 2021.

Our longstanding collaboration with Generations United on intergenerational shared sites, or places where old and young can come together for meaningful interaction, reached new levels of success last year. With the launch of a new online toolkit at SharingOurSpace.org, anyone interested in developing or improving a shared site can find current information on programming, staffing, marketing, and much more.

In concert with this effort, Generations United kicked off a new Shared Site Learning Network in May 2021. People from all over the world, including experts and practitioners in Spain, Israel, the United Kingdom, and Mexico, began coming together regularly to share best practices and new research.

As in past years, Generations United and The Eisner Foundation recognized the importance of engaging not only practitioners, but also policymakers. We once again hosted a virtual briefing on intergenerational shared sites aimed at legislators and their staffs in lieu of the in-person briefings we held on Capitol Hill before Covid-19. The online setting once again proved beneficial, enabling hundreds of attendees to hear remarks from speakers including Miriam Calderon, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Early Learning, Department of Education, Ali Hard, staff on the House Committee on Education and Labor, and several intergenerational shared site leaders and participants.
In another culmination, the Stanford Center on Longevity completed their New Map of Life report in November 2021. The Eisner Foundation was proud to support a graduate Fellow as part of this project, who generated new research on age segregation and how intergenerational solutions can contribute to longer, healthier lives in American society.

The New Map of Life reimagines how we think about all stages of life. American society and institutions were developed when life expectancy was significantly shorter than it is today, yet there has been no change to ideas of education, retirement, civic engagement, or healthcare as we live longer lives. As a result, the Stanford Center on Longevity rethinks our current approaches, seeking opportunities to amplify the benefit of longer lives rather than bemoaning potential costs. The report’s recommendations include that education be a lifelong project, that people work for more years but with shorter work weeks, and that we invest more in early childhood to benefit all ages.

In 2021, The Eisner Foundation continually supported efforts to advance intergenerational ideas and foster collaboration. While the Foundation’s grantmaking focus was largely in Los Angeles, the benefits of intergenerational interaction aren’t limited by geography. As a result, the Foundation continuously pursues opportunities to share the importance of intergenerational programming with a range of audiences by engaging the media, sitting on local and national boards, and speaking at events and conferences.

In addition to editing and contributing to the Stanford Social Innovation Review series mentioned earlier in this report, Eisner Foundation CEO Trent Stamp also authored several additional op-eds and was featured in local and national media as an expert in intergenerational issues. He also continued to co-host the popular podcast “How We Run,” which explores challenges and best practices in nonprofit management.

Foundation staff also served as board members for many nonprofit and philanthropic organizations, including Grantmakers in Aging, The Milken Institute Center for the Future of Aging, The University of Southern California Center on Philanthropy & Public Policy, Eisner Health, Asian Americans/Pacific Islanders in Philanthropy, and Emerging Practitioners in Philanthropy.
The Eisner Foundation continues to be a thought leader on issues surrounding intergenerational initiatives, aging, education, and civic engagement. In 2021, Foundation staff regularly shared expertise at conferences and convenings, largely in a virtual setting due to the Covid-19 pandemic. While these events are an opportunity to share our mission, they are also an opportunity to collaborate with our grantees and other partners as co-presenters.

Highlights included the Milken Institute Future of Health Summit, where Trent Stamp served on a panel discussing Covid-19 and how the pandemic has changed the way we think about older adults and aging; the Points of Light conference, where Trent Stamp co-presented a session with L.A. Works on the benefits of engaging older volunteers; the ASU GSV Summit, where Trent Stamp spoke on a panel discussing intergenerational strategies for children to learn and thrive, and add purpose to later years in life; and the Stanford Century Summit, where Trent Stamp participated on a panel focusing on the Stanford Center on Longevity’s New Map of Life and the intergenerational opportunities within.

In April 2021, Trent Stamp joined fellow panelists David Brooks, Aditi Merchant and Jonathan Haidt for a discussion on intergenerational trust sponsored by Weave, a program of The Aspen Institute.