

**For Immediate Release: June 27, 2006**

**THE IMPACT FUND AWARDS \$173,000 IN PUBLIC INTEREST LITIGATION GRANTS IN CIVIL RIGHTS, ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, AND POVERTY CASES ACROSS THE COUNTRY IN THE PAST SIX MONTHS**

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The Impact Fund, the nation's only foundation devoted to funding complex public interest impact litigation, has awarded \$173,000 in new grants to non-profit organizations and public interest law firms across the nation in the past six months. The Fund, now in its thirteenth year, has granted over \$4 million since its inception. Among the new awards, which cover the expenses of the litigation or project, are:

**Human & Civil Rights:**

\$17,500 to DC-based International Labor Rights Fund for an alien tort claim against Alabama-based mining company for its complicity in gross human rights abuses in Columbia. *Estate of Rodriguez v. Drummond Co., Inc.*

\$15,000 to Belodoff Law Office of Boise, Idaho for its action to enforce a class settlement that improves community-based services to children with severe emotional disturbances. *Jeff D. v. Kempthorne.*

\$14,500 to Atlanta-based Southern Center for Human Rights for its class action on behalf of prisoners denied medical care at the Hamilton Aged and Infirm Correctional Facility in Alabama. *Aris v. Hamilton.*

\$14,500 to the Atlanta-based firm of Molden Holley LLC for its voting rights action challenging Georgia's restriction on multi-jurisdiction voter registration drives. *Charles H. Wesley Education Foundation Inc. v. Cathy Cox.*

\$10,000 to London-based organization, Reprieve, for its action to seek review of incarceration of prisoners held in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. *Razul II v. Bush.*

\$10,000 to UNC Center for Civil Rights in Chapel Hill, North Carolina, for its suit to enforce the right to sound, basic education in a Charlotte/Mecklenburg high-poverty, urban high school. *Hoke County Board of Education v. State of North Carolina.*

\$10,000 to Kentucky Fairness Alliance of Frankfort, Kentucky for its challenge to the appropriation of state funds to a Sectarian School of Optometry that refuses to accept gay students. *Gilgor v. Fletcher.*

\$8,000 to Miami-based Florida International University's Carlos A. Costa Immigration and Human Rights Clinic for its challenge to the Board of Immigration appeals decision denying Haitian refugees released on their own recognizance under the Haitian Refugee Immigration Fairness Act (HRIFA). *Francoise Sicar, Kerby Sicar v. U.S. Attorney General*.

\$7,500 to Everybody Counts, Inc. of Merrillville, Indiana for its challenge to the transit system's lack of disability access. *Everybody Counts, Inc. v. Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission*.

\$7,000 to attorney Eric P. Swenson of Salt Lake City for his challenge to Arizona's Page Unified School District's segregation of Navajo students. *DCEE v. PUSD*.

### **Environmental Justice:**

\$10,000 to San Francisco-based Center on Race Poverty & The Environment for its Clean Air Act suit to require large 'factory' dairies to obtain pre-construction permits. *Association of Irrigated Residents v. Fred Schakel Dairy*.

\$10,000 to Ohio-based Advocates for Basic Legal Equality, Inc., for a Clean Air Act challenge to a commercial wastewater facility located in a poor neighborhood with substantial African-American population. *Citizens for the Responsible Destruction of Chemical Weapons of the Miami Valley v. Perma-Fix of Dayton*.

\$7,000 to New Mexico Environmental Law Center for a challenge to "authority to construct" air quality permit for concrete batch plant to be located across from a community center. *Appeal of "Authority to Construct" Air Quality Permit issued to Vulcan Materials*.

\$2,000 to Santa Fe-based New Mexico Environmental Law Center for its potential challenge to New Mexico Solid Waste Management regulations.

### **Poverty:**

\$10,000 to New Hampshire Legal Assistance for its challenge to the State's delay in approving applications for aid to poor disabled residents. *Dionne v. Commissioner of the New Hampshire Division of Human Services*.

\$10,000 to Idaho Legal Aid Services, Inc. for a challenge to the transfer of the management of a homeless shelter to a religious mission, which has excluded both women and children. *Community House Inc. v. City of Boise*.

\$10,000 to San Francisco-based Equal Justice Society for an action against FEMA by Hurricane Katrina victims denied temporary housing assistance. *McWaters v. FEMA*.

“Once again, our grantees show the importance of creative, hard-hitting social justice litigation,” explains Brad Seligman, the Executive Director of The Impact Fund. “These cases show, once again, that we can fight back, and more importantly, win.”

The Impact Fund provides grants, technical support, and counsel nationwide. Grants are made quarterly. Its most recent annual report and other information may be accessed at its web site: <http://www.impactfund.org/>

Additionally The National Law Journal announced on June 19th its "100 Most Influential Attorneys" for the first time since 2000. Brad Seligman, the Executive Director of The Impact Fund, was one of them.

“First-rate civil rights attorney, currently lead counsel in a class action accusing Wal-Mart of gender discrimination, the largest civil rights class action in U.S. history when certified in 2004; litigating a narrower glass-ceiling gender discrimination case against Wal-Mart competitor Costco Wholesale Corp.; negotiated large settlements with companies such as State Farm and Lucky Stores; founder and director of the nonprofit foundation specializing in complex public interest suits, and leveraged it into a national network of plaintiffs-side civil rights class attorneys; gave away grants worth \$4 million last year.”