

## RECOMMENDATIONS

During the economic expansion of the 1990s, many nonprofit arts organizations focused their energies on capital and facilities expansion. Now that funding is becoming ever more scarce with the economic downturn, it makes sense to redirect energies to developing human capital. We would recommend the following research and programs to policy makers (directors, boards, funders, arts councils) based on our results and research.

- *Promote awareness of leadership succession at all levels of management as an integral part of strategic planning. Basic to this awareness is an appreciation of the costs of underdeveloped human capital and high turnover, and the benefits of investing in the organization's people. Attention needs to be focused on organizational capacity-building issues to address the systemic problems faced by arts organizations.*
- *Recognize underinvestment in staff compensation for its deleterious effects on nonprofit arts organizations. Organizations that succeed in giving priority to offering competitive compensation packages, and those that develop imaginative ways of overcoming funding deficiencies through nonmonetary benefit packages, should be promoted as models.*
- *Conduct large-scale surveys and data collection about nonprofit arts organization staffs on a regular basis, perhaps coordinated by a national research body. There is a strong need for reliable and accessible longitudinal data on employment conditions in the nonprofit arts, including the rates and nature of turnover and vacancy. Better data on salaries and benefits in the nonprofit arts will enable directors to set compensation benchmarks.*
- *Investigate discrimination in arts organizations and make concerted efforts to diversify arts leadership.*
- *Conduct an inventory of nonprofit management training programs in the Chicago area to determine to what extent arts professionals make use of them and what barriers there may be (financial, time, etc.).*
- *Evaluate arts management/administration degrees. Arts administration is a rapidly professionalizing field. Graduate-level programs training arts administrators and managers have been increasing all over the country. Yet there is little systematic study of the value of such training and of the career paths of individuals with such training. It might be useful to look at the retention and attrition rate of graduates from arts administration programs.<sup>17</sup>*
- *Develop low-cost leadership succession and evaluation workshops for arts organizations. Leadership succession planning and formal staff evaluations should be a part of any nonprofit organization's routine functioning.*
- *Encourage studies of the external labor pool for the nonprofit arts. What are the conduits for entering the field? How can they be streamlined and further developed?*



**EL: "I found my mentor's advice invaluable . . . more useful than much of my on-the-job training and arts marketing courses."**