

# Allianz Foundation for North America

## Summary Overview 2015/2016

# A message from Christopher Worthley, Executive Director

**The year has just begun, but things are already picking up speed** at the Allianz Foundation for North America (AZFNA). On January 14, we joined again with colleagues at Allianz Global Investors and our partners at YouthBridge-NY to host our annual speed mentoring event. Some 30 young people from diverse backgrounds came together with colleagues from Allianz, other local companies, and YouthBridge at the AllianzGI office near Times Square for an evening of fast-paced guidance on how to write a good resume, how to network, and how to put one's best foot forward in the workplace. As in past years, it was a fun and unique opportunity for Allianz to welcome the community into one of its most prominent U.S. office buildings and a chance for young people to learn more about the world of work.

The annual YouthBridge speed mentoring event at Allianz is just one example of the Foundation's work with young people and Allianz colleagues. AZFNA was founded and began operations in 2002 as a sign of Allianz SE's lasting commitment to the region. Funded and managed in cooperation with Allianz companies (operating entities, OEs) in the U.S., the Foundation has, since the beginning, brought significant social investment into OE communities coast to coast. Our mission is *empowering young people to shape a secure future*, which reflects fundamental concerns for the future shared by Allianz insurance and asset management professionals across the board.

Since its inception, AZFNA has supported a broad range of projects for youth empowerment and leadership. These include programs for life skills development for economically underserved and formerly homeless teens, youth leadership around issues of diversity and inclusion, and career planning for young women. The Foundation also supports Allianz companies and employees in creating opportunities for engagement. These activities have included skills-based volunteering with Foundation partners in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico, the creation of cross-OE volunteering days and workshop experiences – including the speed mentoring event in New York – and other forms of ongoing engagement with Foundation partners.

This summary report offers a view into our activities over the course of the past year. I am pleased to offer this overview to you, our many stakeholders, partners, and friends, with heartfelt thanks for your ongoing commitment to supporting young people. As they often tell me in no uncertain terms, young people are both the present *and* the future. The work we do together helps make it possible for them to shape their own lives, strengthen their communities, and become actively engaged in the world we all share.



Christopher Worthley (top, center), joined by fellow "speed mentors" (left to right) Kevin Schrein and Gregor Bobowick (Allianz Capital Partners), together with young people and professional mentors from across New York City.



## Being prepared when the doors open



We sat down with Christie Ko, Executive Director of the Fiver Children's Foundation (Fiver) in New York City, to talk about her work with the organization, a longstanding partner and recent grant recipient of AZFNA.

### **The Fiver Children's Foundation makes a 10-year commitment to children from underserved communities throughout New York City and central New York. What makes this long-term commitment significant?**

When Tom Tucker, our founder, was conceptualizing the idea for Fiver, he believed in order to really change a child's life you have to stick with them over a long period of time. At the age of eight or nine, every child has hope. When you get a few years beyond that, many kids in poor communities in New York have already lost hope to become something. From their time as a child until they become young adults they need to feel: We are there for you, we are not giving up on you. That is the reason we are making long-term commitments.

### **What does Fiver strive to teach and impart to young people?**

There is a book that has gone around this office called *How Children Succeed* by Paul Tough. We take a lot of lessons from this book. Tough showed that rather than IQ, character strengths like persistence and passion will allow kids to be more successful in life than being the smartest person in the room. So what we strive to teach to young people is that if they are committed, hard-working, and focusing on their character development, they can achieve significant goals in their lives. But we also teach them that it is important to become an engaged citizen.



### How does Fiver do that?

Our goal for them to become engaged citizens is to give them the tools to think about injustices and what role they can play in combating these injustices. We have developed a curriculum around ethical decision-making. In a two-week class in summer we teach ninth graders a framework on ethical decision-making, including how to identify the moral issue or how to weigh the options.

### For the next two years, the Allianz Foundation for North America is supporting Fiver's workforce development program for 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders. What do you plan to accomplish with this grant?

We created this program to make it easier for our young adults to enter the workforce. Through the program they visit a dozen different companies, from health care organizations to finance institutions. They go, make a visit, and connect with people. Also part of the program is a formal curriculum where they learn public speaking, writing resumes, and how to perform in an interview. So when the kids go on their first interview, it won't feel like their first interview because they will have practiced. With the grant, Fiver does the best we can to not only open the doors but to make sure that the kids are prepared when the doors open.

## Allianz fulfills \$1 million commitment to communities hit by Hurricane Katrina

The last week of August 2005 will forever be associated with one of the deadliest hurricanes the United States has ever experienced. When Hurricane Katrina hit American shores, more than a thousand people died, homes were destroyed, and millions of Americans had to struggle through chaos. Despite the suffering and mass destruction, the catastrophe proved that, in times of need, people band together to help.

Soon after Katrina hit, the Allianz head office in Munich promised \$1 million in short- and long-term support through AZFNA for communities in the southeastern U.S. Working with local organizations responding to the crisis, AZFNA made possible the delivery of much-needed household supplies to those taking long-term refuge in FEMA trailers – among them some 1,000 children in Baton Rouge, LA, alone – and supported the creation of on-the-ground networks for grief counseling in Louisiana and Mississippi to mitigate the social risk of post-traumatic stress disorder among adults and young children. Financial support from Allianz also went to groups working to rebuild people's homes in the wake of the crisis.

AZFNA also worked with the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) to create a unique educational program for young people whose families had been displaced by the hurricane. The Southeast Climate Witness program brought a select group of high school students together for an intensive, week-long workshop series on climate change. The experience included hands-on field work on issues related to wetlands preservation, coastal erosion, and species endangered by such risks. The students also visited Washington, DC, where they met with members of Congress from their various southeastern districts to discuss the climate risks their region continues to face.





In 2015 Allianz fulfilled its full \$1 million commitment with two final grants focused on supporting economically disadvantaged neighborhoods in New Orleans, LA, by implementing money-saving, environmentally friendly home solutions. Working with Green Light New Orleans and the Urban Conservancy, AZFNA is promoting the use of energy-efficient, compact fluorescent light bulbs, healthy urban gardening, and hard surface reduction for improved water management.

Since 2006 Green Light New Orleans (GLNO) has installed more than 515,000 energy-efficient light bulbs in the homes of underresourced communities. The average household using the bulbs saves about \$1,000 each year. With its backyard vegetable garden program, GLNO is building over 20,000 backyard gardens – again with a focus on those in need – and enabling people to save money while eating healthier foods.

Parallel to this, the Urban Conservancy (UC), which promotes the wise stewardship of the urban-built environment, will use its Allianz grant to replace excessive paved surfaces in underresourced neighborhoods with water-absorbent green space and teach New Orleans residents about the importance of storm-water management. Both projects will make a lasting difference in terms of financial empowerment of households in need and New Orleans' efforts to mitigate the kinds of risks the city faced in Hurricane Katrina.



The 2015 TGI group in front of the German Federal Chancellery in Berlin.

## Allianz-AJC Third Generation Initiative with Germany Close Up

While not an AZFNA program, the Third Generation Initiative (TGI) is managed by the AZFNA executive director, Christopher Worthley (left), on behalf of Allianz. TGI is a long-term project partnership between Allianz, the American Jewish Committee (AJC), and Germany Close Up. The program promotes transatlantic German-Jewish dialogue and mutual understanding. Together with young professional peers from the U.S., employees from Allianz companies in Germany and young German alumni of Action Reconciliation Service for Peace explore the past, present, and future of German-Jewish relations. This is a unique opportunity to build new networks, deepen intercultural and communication skills, and make a meaningful contribution to how modern Germany and German institutions are viewed abroad, especially in the U.S.

## 2015 – 2016 Partnerships and major grant recipients

**At The Crossroads** (San Francisco, CA): [www.atthecrossroads.org](http://www.atthecrossroads.org)  
**The Atlantic Council** (Washington, DC): [www.atlanticcouncil.org](http://www.atlanticcouncil.org)  
**Boys and Girls Clubs of the Twin Cities** (St. Paul, MN): [www.boysandgirls.org](http://www.boysandgirls.org)  
**City Incite** (Chicago, IL): [www.cityincite.org](http://www.cityincite.org)  
**Fiver Children's Foundation** (New York, NY): [www.fiver.org](http://www.fiver.org)  
**Girls for a Change** (Richmond, VA): [www.girlsforachange.org](http://www.girlsforachange.org)  
**Girls, Inc.** (New York, NY): [www.girlsinc.org](http://www.girlsinc.org)  
**The Highlands School** (Bel Air, MD): [www.thehighlandsschool.org](http://www.thehighlandsschool.org)  
**Junior Achievement of New York** (New York, NY): [www.jany.org](http://www.jany.org)  
**Keystone Community Services** (Minneapolis, MN): [www.keystonecommunityservices.org](http://www.keystonecommunityservices.org)  
**Lawrence Hall Youth Services** (Chicago, IL): [www.lawrencehall.org](http://www.lawrencehall.org)  
**One Million Degrees** (Chicago, IL): [www.onemilliondegrees.org](http://www.onemilliondegrees.org)  
**Project for Pride in Living** (Minneapolis, MN): [www.ppl-inc.org](http://www.ppl-inc.org)  
**Soliya** (New York, NY): [www.soliya.net](http://www.soliya.net)  
**Virginia Council on Economic Education** (Richmond, VA): [www.vcee.org](http://www.vcee.org)  
**YouthBridge-NY** (New York, NY): [www.youthbridgeny.org](http://www.youthbridgeny.org)

## 2015 Allianz Foundation Fellowship learning sites

**Action Reconciliation Service for Peace** (Philadelphia, PA): [www.actionreconciliation.org](http://www.actionreconciliation.org)  
**CITYarts** (New York, NY): [www.cityarts.org](http://www.cityarts.org)  
**Fiver Children's Foundation** (New York, NY): [www.fiver.org](http://www.fiver.org)  
**Great River Greening** (St. Paul, MN): [www.greatrivergreening.org](http://www.greatrivergreening.org)  
**LearnServe International** (Washington, DC): [www.learn-serve.org](http://www.learn-serve.org)



Allianz Foundation Fellows take part in intensive learning experiences with AZFNA's not-for-profit partners during the summer or academic year.



Thomas Bernhardt-Lanier,  
2015 Allianz Foundation Fellow with  
LearnServe in Washington, DC



Darius Mikrobarts,  
2015 Fellow with Great River  
Greening, St. Paul, MN