

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

THIRD WAVE FOUNDATION
LAUNCHES INNOVATIVE NEW APPROACH TO FEMINIST PHILANTHROPY

New York City, New York April 1, 2006 – Philanthropist: male, white, wealthy, lover of art. WRONG! It's your neighbor, your mom, YOU! This is the message that fifteen young women of color and transgender youth received when they gathered in New York City in March to launch Third Wave Foundation's *Why Give Institute*.

“Through the Why Give Institute, we are building a feminist philanthropic legacy. We mentor and train our grantees to become activist donors, erasing the artificial line between activist and philanthropist and creating a new culture of feminist philanthropy,” explained Third Wave's Executive Director, Monique Mehta

Third Wave Foundation believes that for progressive social change organizations to thrive, we need to expand the pool of people that support and sustain this work. Recent studies indicate that giving to progressive organizations has actually dropped in recent years – in fact only 7% of all charitable contributions go to women's organizations and only 1% toward transgender activists.

The *Why Give Institute* is a 12-month grassroots fundraising training that empowers young activists of color to mobilize resources from their own communities. These young women and trans youth come from Third Wave's grantee organizations in Los Angeles, San Francisco, Boston, New York, and Chicago. By participating in *Why Give*, they are making a significant commitment to Third Wave, their communities, and to themselves. Each of the 15 young leaders has a goal of raising \$3,000+ for Third Wave's 2007 grant-making cycle and will have the unique opportunity to participate in the grant-making for the funds they collectively raised. To assist them in this exciting endeavor, seasoned social-change philanthropists from the respective regions have been recruited as mentors. To round out the Institute, participants are expected to share their knowledge and training with their organizations and activist communities, fulfilling the commitment of Third Wave to empower the individual *and* community.

At the end of the intensive 3-day training, Yaromil Fong-Olivares had this to say:

“Why Give... gives community organizers and activists a new lens to approach their work. I believe in community accountability, responsibility, and collective action. Yet, I rarely considered fundraising as part of this equation... But by the end of the weekend, I had a better understanding of how growing up in a low-income, immigrant family in New York affects my fear of [fundraising]. I believe that my role as a philanthropist within the social justice movement is to promote long term giving as a form of community sustainability and accountability.”

The *Why Give Institute* is made possible by support like The Venture Fund of the Women's Funding Network. It is Third Wave Foundation's latest approach to leadership development for young women and transgender youth. To support this program and Third Wave's vision of philanthropy, please visit www.thirdwavefoundation.org. For more information on the *Why Give Institute* please contact Vanessa Llana at Vanessa@thirdwavefoundation.org.

