

# Vitality



## Weed fire: Recovery begins after a disaster

Houses start to rise after a fire that nearly destroyed the town

**O**n the morning of Sept. 15, 2014, people in the northern California community of Weed were enjoying a sunny fall day. Children were settling into their week at school. The Weed Community Center's gym was echoing with the sound of teen-agers attending a county-wide Athlete Committed event.

And then everything changed. At about 1:30 p.m., one of the student athletes pointed out the window to the astonishing sight of a fire burning its way toward the building. Pushed by high winds, the Boles Fire quickly spread to more than 200 acres. By 6 p.m., stunned townspeople were taking stock of everything they had lost: 157 homes and

eight commercial properties completely destroyed, and many more structures damaged. The Community Center, one of the first structures to be evacuated, was completely destroyed. So were two of Weed's churches. Two schools were damaged, along with the Roseburg Forest Products veneer plant.

The Boles Fire was unexpected. It was incredibly fast. And it was devastating. Unfortunately, it was not unique. Catastrophic events, whether caused by nature or by man, seem to happen with distressing regularity.

"The lessons we learn from the Weed fire and other disasters help us all build the kind of communities that can

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Scholarship recipient closes in on lifelong dream. Page 12.

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## Cover story: Boles Fire

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rebound and recover,” says Anne Kubisch, president of The Ford Family Foundation.

Events such as Hurricane Katrina and Superstorm Sandy have grabbed the nation’s attention, but the Pacific Northwest has a tragic list of its own, including last year’s deadly landslide in Oso, Wash., Vernonia’s floods in 1996 and 2007, and the 2011



tsunami that hit Oregon’s south coast. The expectation that a major earthquake is due off the Pacific Coast (see our Spring 2014 issue) adds even more urgency to the community resiliency discussion.

“We need to get people to think about disasters as part of our lives—it’s not *if* it happens, but *when*,” says Bob Ottenhoff, chief executive officer of the Center for Disaster Philanthropy. “By thinking about the full life cycle of disaster, we can do much more to plan response and mitigation, and to build resilient communities that can absorb a blow and then bounce back quicker.”

### What works? What doesn’t?

In this issue of *Community Vitality*, we look in more detail at what happened in Weed, and the efforts that community is making to recover. In an event like this, what works? What doesn’t? And how can we best help our neighbors, if they are the ones in need?

In Weed, the recovery process promises to be long, but a strong tradition of community involvement has helped get it started. “There has been enormous help from many,” says Jennifer Rubio, a Ford Sons and Daughters scholarship recipient whose family lost three homes, along with their pets. “I was born and raised here and I know how strong everyone is. This town will come back even if the process takes time.” ■

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Jennifer Rubio left her hometown of Weed last August to start her third year at Chico State. Twenty-two days after her departure, Rubio learned that she would never again open the front door to her home, cuddle her dog, or flip through her baby album. Like more than half the town’s residents, her family had lost their home and everything in it to the Boles Fire.

“It’s a surreal feeling that makes me cry every time I think

# The commun

Even while first responders fought the blaze, residents from town and the surrounding areas swung into action

back on this day,” says Rubio, a Ford Sons and Daughters scholarship recipient. “Just knowing that you lost memories that you won’t ever get to see again is the most difficult thing to overlook.”

Life changed on Sept. 15, 2014, for virtually every one of the 3,000 residents of Weed. Those fortunate enough to keep their homes inevitably knew someone who didn’t, and the devastation affected every facet of life in Weed — shopping, business, church, school. And even today, for those who try to forget, a look out the window will bring it all home.

**Memories of the day of the fire are etched in my mind, as well as the images of devastation that followed. I felt as if I were driving through a war zone in my own small town.**

—Tina Stewart

“The biggest reminder of the event is the visual effect it had on our town, which is forever changed,” says Ford Opportunity Scholar Tina Stewart. “It used to be so beautiful, surrounded by lush green pine trees. Now, blocks of homes and businesses that used to be there are vacant, covered with stumps or burnt rounds from cut-down trees.”

While Weed did not have a specific plan to deal with disas-

ters like an arson-caused fire racing through town, it does have a community that is used to working together. A long-term fund-raising campaign had successfully ended with the opening of a new community center in March 2014. Town leaders are longtime participants in all of the Ford Institute Leadership Program initiatives.

### Reacting to disaster

In the hours immediately following the fire, that practice of collaboration proved critical.

receive donations today. “We are a small enough organization that we can be that flexible,” Harris says.

At the Family and Community Resource Center of Weed, which was not damaged, staff members quickly found themselves learning a new job — case management for people affected by the fire. The center’s three employees normally provide family-oriented events and education, but in the first few days after the fire, they found

program officer, lost her own home, but not before her husband grabbed the family dog.

The community’s immediate response to the crisis wasn’t without issues. “It took a while to jell,” Ochs says. “There is so much immediate giving of clothes and things — you just accept it because you don’t know what else to do. We didn’t have systems in place until a month and a half later.”

Many people received what they needed, but the sheer



JASON NAWA

**An air tanker drops fire retardant on Weed on Sept. 15, 2014, partially containing the spread of flames.**

# ity mobilized to help

Even as the fire swept through town and the new community center burned, the northern California community quickly swung into action.

While more than 60 first responders battled the blaze, folks in the area immediately began looking for ways to help. Staff at Shasta Regional Community Foundation volunteered their organization as the central collection point for financial donations, opting to waive the standard administrative fees.

“After we decided that was what we were going to do, we got our board’s support, and we called Napa Valley Community Foundation for advice; they had just responded to the earthquake there,” says Jill Harris, the foundation’s development and communications officer.

A web page for online transactions was established by 8 a.m. the day after the fire; it took in \$22,000 in the first eight hours. The fund, which totals \$530,000 so far, continues to

themselves interviewing about 150 people with immediate needs for food and shelter, while dealing with their losses as well. Kelsea Ochs, Resource Center

volume of donations created logistical challenges.

Many agencies gave unselfishly of time and money, and only counted the cost when the

adrenaline wore off. Although Ochs’s agency was able to eventually add a grant-funded position, the bulk of the extra work fell on staff and several volunteers. “It was a steep learning curve. Right now we’re trying to learn a process for prioritizing. What does that system look like? No one knows.”

Harris says the Community Foundation recently did an impact study on the time it put into the response. A conservative estimate of expense, she says, is \$43,000. “We wouldn’t do anything different, but it’s something to know,” she points out. “We may be looked at to do this again.”

### Extraordinary response

In the immediate aftermath of the fire, the community came together in some amazing ways:

Employees at Roseburg Forest Products, one of the town’s largest employers, helped fight flames that significantly damaged the veneer facility. “We had such an incredible response from our people at the plant,” Weed Plant Manager Jeff Schol-

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VIRGINIA BECKER

**Firefighters from around the state responded immediately to help battle the Boles Fire.**

# Each disaster brings its

## Donate money, not stuff, is just one of the suggestions from the experts

In one three-month period last year, there was only one 18-hour period when the American Red Cross' northern California chapter didn't have at least one shelter open somewhere. Front and center on the Boles Fire, Red Cross volunteers opened and manned two shelters, as well as provided meals, emotional support, help assessing damage and health services.

The Red Cross knows better than most how important it is to plan for disaster. "Our work continues long after the disaster fades from the news cycles,"

says Kathleen Weis, chief executive officer of the Capital Region chapter in Sacramento. Each event brings its own lesson, and below we look at a few of them.

### Start preparing now

"A disaster is not the time [for organizations] to begin passing out their business card," says Bob Ottenhoff, chief executive officer of the Center for Disaster Philanthropy ([bob.ottenhoff@disaster-philanthropy.org](mailto:bob.ottenhoff@disaster-philanthropy.org)). "Many times, the community and private foundations and corporations and really, even the nonprofit community, have not done much in the way of planning and preparation."

Having a plan in place for who does what eliminates the need to take time away from dealing with the crisis. Ottenhoff says that officials of the

donor community are often left scrambling until decisions are made about who is going to raise money and who will manage the funds. In Weed, the Shasta Regional Community Foundation stepped up with a donation web page within hours of the fire.

### Be very clear about money

People have historically been generous about donating money in the aftermath of a catastrophe. In fact, Ottenhoff says 90% of all dollars are donated within 90 days of the event. There needs to be transparency and clarity about why the money is being raised, who is making the decision about what to do with it, and who is responsible for it.

"Donors gave lots of money around Oso, for example, but

the expectations for it were not always clear," Ottenhoff says. "After the Sandy Hook shooting, there were all kinds of people who were creating funds, all kinds of people making decisions on where it was spent. That raises potential for conflicts."

### Be clear about donations

During the Boles Fire, the community of Weed was inundated with donations of materials, including food, clothing, and pet supplies. It took several days to set up a system to handle the donations, and storing, hauling and distributing it took precious time and space. Eventually, the sheer volume of goods made it necessary to ship some of the items out of Siskiyou County.

Eric Kiltz, disaster program manager with the Red Cross of Northeastern California at the time of the fire, told the local newspaper shortly after the fire that they were unable to store and haul any more supplies. Financial donations, he said, would better serve the organization in the long run. "The point about money is that money can be leveraged better than stuff," Kiltz said. "If I get money and I need bottled water, I can go and get exactly as much as I know we need."

One option endorsed by the Red Cross is for those who have clothes or goods to sell them in a yard sale and give the proceeds to a relief fund.

### Consider a coordinator

In her book *The Resilience Dividend*, Judith Rodin, presi-



Kathleen Weis, chief executive officer of the American Red Cross Capital Region chapter, and Robert Foxworthy of CAL FIRE survey the fire damage in Weed, three days after the fire.

VIRGINIA BECKER

# own lessons

dent of The Rockefeller Foundation, advocates for communities to name a “chief resilience officer.” The CRO, she says, should have the ear of the city’s top-decision maker, and have the proven ability to act as a conductor for a disparate orchestra of resilience-builders, from law enforcement to disaster planning to economic development. “Every city has a different set of needs—but every city needs a Chief Resilience Officer,” Rodin says.

## Chart your progress

When the devastating flood of 2007 hit the town of Vernonia, community leaders looking ahead to the recovery phase had an advantage — they’d been

through it before, just 11 years earlier. The 1996 flood taught them the importance of being at the table in all stages of the crisis, not just after the rescue and response phases were complete.

“People are understandably focused on rescue,” says Jim Tierney, executive director of the Community Action Team serving the North Coast area. “The idea that you would be trying to talk and think about recovery on day 1 or 2 is hard for some people to accept.”

Tierney has developed a detailed Disaster Recovery diagram that illustrates the journey that Vernonia is taking to recovery, beginning with day 1 of the disaster. “The chart is a road map for recovery people to take to the rescue people, and show how vital it is for them to be at the table,” Tierney says. Download the chart at the online version of *Community Vitality* ([www.tfff.org/cv](http://www.tfff.org/cv)).

In 1996, Tierney’s team was waved off until the immediate rescue phase was over. That almost happened again in 2007, Tierney says, until a city official who had been at the earlier flood insisted on the recovery team’s inclusion.

Their involvement paid off in some tangible ways. From the first day of the 2007 flood, for example, there was one recovery team member whose sole job was to track the use of volunteer resources. Later on, that information brought in more than \$300,000 in matching funds. ■

## Boles Fire claims lives of family pets

The victims of the Boles Fire were not just people. While there were no human fatalities from the fire, the Siskiyou Humane Society in Mt. Shasta estimates that more than 100 pets died in the blaze; many more were injured. The organization’s staff and volunteers spent days after the fire, searching for lost pets, transporting injured animals to local veterinarians and distributing pet food and supplies. Some of the costs were offset by a \$5,000 grant from the Petco Foundation.

Jennifer Rubio’s five-year-old yellow Lab, Milo, died in the fire, but the family cat, Fluffy, showed up in their front yard three days later. ■



DANA HIGHT



VIRGINIA BECKER



THE OREGONIAN

Top: Within a couple of days of the Boles Fire, Weed was swamped with donations of clothes and goods, filling a warehouse. Relief workers requested no more. The Red Cross suggests that rather than donating stuff, sell the items in a yard sale. Then, give the proceeds to a relief fund, which can be used for specific needs like water and food. Middle: Volunteers unload food supplies in Weed after the Boles Fire. Bottom: The recovery after the 2007 Vernonia flood benefited from lessons learned in the 1996 flood. Recovery personnel need to be at the table in all stages of the crisis, not just after the rescue and response phases are complete.

► Economic development is a long-term commitment, says Nancy Straw, the director of The Ford Family Foundation's new program on community and economic development. "You may not get results in six months or even in two years. You need a long-term focus and effort that will have to be sustained over time."



NORA VITZ HARRISON

# A long-term focus and effort

Nancy Straw discusses the program that will help realize one of Kenneth Ford's original goals for the Foundation

*"If the viability of rural communities is to exist in a more sustainable way, then more has to be done in the area of economic development, and I don't think there is any other organization [other than The Ford Family Foundation] in the state that is more likely to try."*

— Charlie Walker, President Emeritus, Linfield College, and Founding Board Member, The Ford Family Foundation

Charlie Walker was a friend of Kenneth Ford. Walker was also instrumental in helping Kenneth Ford shape his legacy. In the 1970s, Walker and Ford, the founder of Roseburg Forest Products and one of the co-founders of The Ford Family Foundation, talked for months

about what Ford wanted to accomplish through The Ford Family Foundation.

In a 2011 interview in *Community Vitality*, Walker reflected on how the Foundation has realized many of Ford's goals and missed on others. "The element we have developed least fully is economic development," he said.

This year, The Ford Family Foundation is finally developing that element. It has embarked on a new program that supports rural communities taking action to improve local conditions.

"The work of the new Community and Economic Development program will support rural communities that have come together, built local capacity and made a commitment to a com-

munity-improvement agenda," says Anne Kubisch, president of The Ford Family Foundation. "The program complements the Ford Institute for Community Building, which helps to build the capacity of rural communities and their residents."

The Foundation will fund qualified grant requests for programs, projects, operating costs, capacity building, capital projects and research. Initial grants will range from \$5,000 to \$150,000, and capital grants could be larger.

Nancy Straw, a national expert who has managed community and economic development efforts in Minnesota for more than 15 years, joined the Foundation in January to direct the new program. We sat down with her for more information.

### What is your background in economic development?

I spent 18 years with a philanthropic organization in Minnesota that did business development and lending. We did “gap” lending — when a business owner didn’t have enough equity, we would make a loan and take a subordinate collateral position behind the bank to help launch or expand a business. The impact was more jobs, stronger businesses and strong relationships with the business community. We also supported training for workers already in the workforce.

### Why did you decide to come to work with The Ford Family Foundation?

I just couldn’t say no. I love starting new things — I like the energy that comes with building new networks and meeting new people. The philosophy of The Ford Family Foundation is so closely aligned with my passion for small towns. I’m a farm girl; rural communities have been my whole life. Each one has its own personality, with wonderful leaders who are passionate and committed. Working with new leaders is so energizing.

### What do you like best about Oregon so far?

The weather was a huge draw, as well as the beauty of the area and the entire state. We came through the Columbia Gorge on our drive here, and this state is gorgeous. The people here ... when I came out for the initial interview, there was a warmth and welcoming atmosphere, and not only at the Foundation. Everywhere we went we were welcomed with open arms.

### What is in store for the new program in the near future?

Well, the Foundation was putting things on my calendar two months before I got here in January, and it’s been a whirlwind. I’ll be on the road to meet people around the state. I plan to spend six to 12 months getting to know the networks and the services — the landscape in the state in terms of business development. I’ll be talking to other staff members, and with graduates of Foundation programs to identify things we can do to add value. We don’t want to duplicate efforts.

### What is one thing you want people to know about community and economic development?

It’s a long-term commitment. You may not get results in six months or even in two years. You need a long-term focus and effort that will have to be sustained over time.

### What do you like best about working in the economic development area?

I really love working with local business owners because they are tied into so many things at the heart of the community. There’s a commitment there when they see their employees at the grocery store and at school events — it makes a difference in how they approach layoffs and staff reductions. ■

**The Foundation will fund qualified grant requests from \$5,000 to \$150,000. Capital grants could be larger.**

## Aden Bliss, new CFO, understands the ‘power and potential of philanthropy’

A third-generation Oregonian is coming back to Southern Oregon to take the position of chief financial officer of The Ford Family Foundation. Aden Bliss, a financial executive with 14 years



**Bliss**

of experience, succeeds the current CFO, Deborah Millsap. She will step down in June 2015 after more than 16 years at the Foundation in order to pursue other endeavors.

Bliss, a native of Eugene, comes to The Ford Family Foundation from the Blue Shield of California Foundation in San Francisco, where he was CFO.

At BSCF, he oversaw all business operations, including accounting, finance, grants and contracts management. BSCF is one of the largest health funders in California, especially in rural counties across the state.

“Aden has strong experience and qualifications that align with our mission,” says Anne Kubisch, president of The Ford Family Foundation. “Not only does he have the financial expertise that we need, but he also has an understanding of the power and potential of philanthropy.”

Kubisch credits current CFO Deborah Millsap for putting into place all of the financial systems of the Foundation. “Deborah was hired by the Foundation in 1999,” Kubisch says. “She built our finance department from scratch and has managed it impeccably. We will miss her very much.”

Bliss, a product of the public schools in District 4J in Eugene, credits the support of scholarships for making it possible for him to attend college. “I spent a great deal of my childhood in rugged and remote parts of Oregon,” Bliss recalls. “I camped in the Willowa Mountains, played sports in Myrtle Creek and visited family in Cheshire.”

At the Foundation, Bliss will be responsible for maintaining the integrity of the Foundation’s finance department, monitoring investments and financial information; and preparing financial statements, budgets and tax returns. (The CFO does not select investments.)

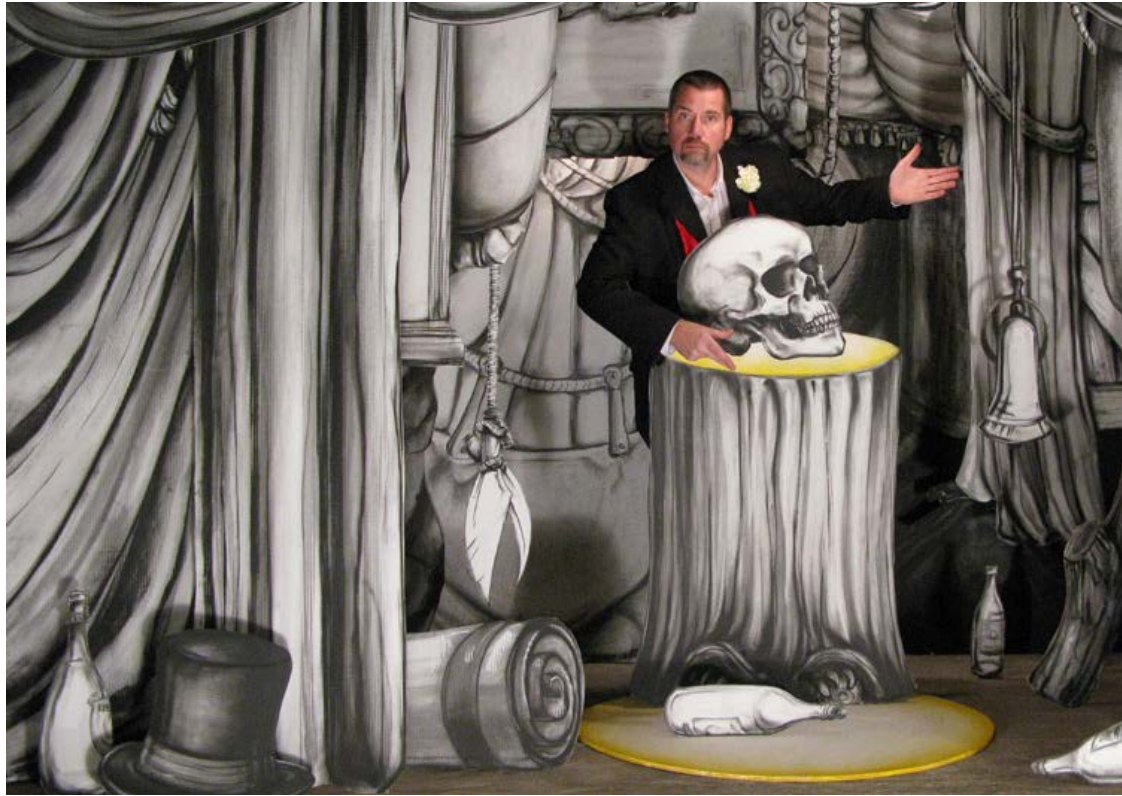
“My wife, Meredith, and I are excited to be closer to family and live in a smaller community,” Bliss says. “We are looking forward to sharing with our two children the uniqueness and beauty of Oregon.”

Bliss has a master of business administration degree from The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, and a bachelor’s degree in management sciences and engineering from Stanford University. ■

**I spent a great deal of my childhood in rugged and remote parts of Oregon. I camped in the Willowa Mountains, played sports in Myrtle Creek and visited family in Cheshire.**

— Aden Bliss

David Eckard strikes a still pose in his artwork from *Prestidigitation-A Folly in Eleven Acts*, 2009. Variations of this exhibition were hosted at Centre International d'Art Contemporain, Pont-Aven, France; Atelier Dado, Cetinje, Montenegro; and Call + Response, Museum of Contemporary Craft, Portland.



# An artistic community

David Eckard makes a plan for his future — one that includes other artists, friends

David Eckard grew up on a farm in the Midwest. When he turned 50 last year, he started sowing seeds of a slightly different nature but with the same sense of family and community that imbued his early years.

In 2010, The Ford Family Foundation named Eckard one of its first three Hallie Ford Fellows in the Visual Arts. The fellowship is a \$25,000 award bestowed on Oregon visual artists who have demonstrated a depth of sophisticated practice and potential for future accom-

plishment. Eckard, a sculptor and mixed media artist, is an associate professor in sculpture at Pacific Northwest College of Art in Portland.

“Receiving the award ... deepened my feeling of com-

munity, not just the faculty community, but of active, dedicated artists such as what we experience when the Fellows go away for our annual convening,” Eckard says. “This is important because creative work can be so

isolating that you feel as if you are in a desert sometimes.”

One of his first jobs after receiving the fellowship was a public artwork for the Vashon Island library. This commission financed a down payment on a permanent residence, complete with a barn and enough land to build studio spaces for other artists in the back of the property. The deal closed in July 2014.

“Turning 50, I began to realize that if I was going to be in a good situation by the time I was 60, I’d better start getting serious about finding a property that would allow me to have goals that were longer than semester to semester,” he says.



David Eckard's *Spoke* from the exhibition *Tournament (lunens)*, which debuted at the Art Gym at Marylhurst University. Subsequently, it was exhibited at Consolidated Works, a multi-disciplinary art center in Seattle in 2003.

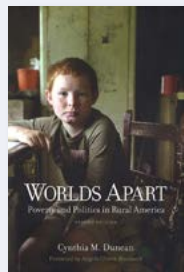


# Resources offer insights

Get the tools you need to help make a difference in your community with the Ford Institute for Community Building Select Books. We provide these resources at no charge. Keep them, share them. The only requirement is providing us with your feedback on the publication ordered.

Here are details on three new Select Books:

**Worlds Apart: Poverty and Politics in Rural America**, by Cynthia Duncan. 328 pages. ©2015. When it was first published in 1999, *Worlds Apart* gave readers a glimpse of the nature of poverty through the stories of real people in three remote rural areas of the United



One of those goals is to build community, and he hopes to do that by building studio spaces for other artists. "This is about committing to my own creativity, but also how I might be more inclusive, sharing the opportunity with others," Eckard says. "How exciting this would be to be able to offer up more space and actually build a community on the property. I fantasize about what that could be — an art campground."

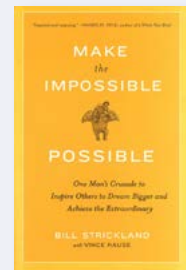
Eckard says he'd like to see artist colleagues work collectively and challenge one another to have a larger presence. In his vision of the space, artists would be dedicated to their individual work but encouraged to collaborate on shared projects.

"I want to surround myself with people who are doing the good work, the dirty work, the hard work, who are also helping to maintain a creative culture." ■

States: New England, Appalachia, and the Mississippi Delta. In this new edition, Duncan returns to her original research, interviewing some of the same people as well as some new key informants. Duncan provides powerful new insights into the dynamics of poverty, politics and community change.

**The Resilience Dividend: Being Strong in a World Where Things Go Wrong**, by Judith Rodin. 384 pages. © 2014. With a richly anecdotal range of stories, Rockefeller Foundation President Judith Rodin shows how people, organizations, businesses, communities, and cities have developed resilience in the face of otherwise catastrophic challenges. Building resilience—the ability to bounce back more quickly and

effectively—is an urgent social and economic issue that Rodin believes should be at the top of every community's to-do list. Read the complete review on page 16.



**Make the Impossible Possible: One Man's Crusade to Inspire Others to Dream Bigger and Achieve the Extraordinary**, by Bill Strickland. 204 pages. © 2009. This inspirational book showcases the lessons learned by Bill Strickland as he worked with disadvantaged children and adults in Pittsburgh, Penn., through the jobs train-

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ing center and community arts program he founded. "I'm not a businessman at all," Strickland writes. "...my mission is to turn people's lives around." This book will tell you how, in 200 highly readable pages. ■

## Two ways to read

*Community Vitality* is online. [www.tfff.org/cv](http://www.tfff.org/cv) Receive email notifications when a new online issue is available. Sign up at: [www.tfff.org/cvsubscribe](http://www.tfff.org/cvsubscribe)

Printed copies of *Community Vitality* are available on request. Send an email to: [communityvitality@tfff.org](mailto:communityvitality@tfff.org)



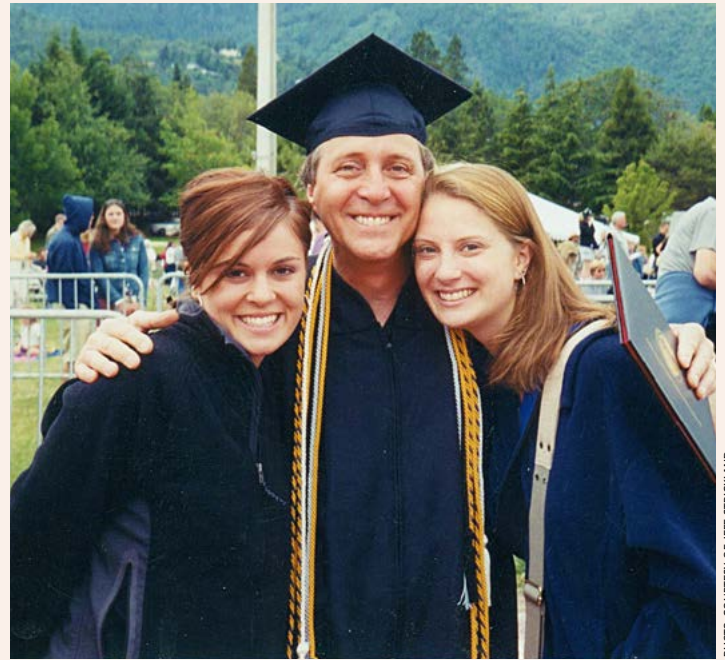
# Study examines effects of Scholarship

## Survey focuses on Ford ReStart and Ford Opportunity Scholarship programs

When Jeff Strickland started college at Southern Oregon University in 2000, he wasn't a typical student. Forty-three years old, he was parenting two daughters and working full time.

After receiving a ReStart Scholarship from The Ford Family Foundation, life changed a little. With 90% of his cost of attendance covered, he was able to quit work his senior year and concentrate on his studies.

It paid off — in 2004, Strickland graduated at the top of his class with a degree in psychology, a member of the first class of ReStart scholarship recipients. When the Foundation extended



In 2004, Ford ReStart Scholar Jeff Strickland celebrated receiving his bachelor's degree from Southern Oregon University with daughters Kailen and Leah.

## Some of the findings of the study:

- 100% who received their scholarship before 2009 have **completed a college degree**
- 76% plan on **continuing their education**
- 41% have obtained an **advanced college degree** (1996-2008 cohort)
- Most common work fields:  
29% **health care/medical**  
26% **education**  
12% **human/social service**
- Recipients exhibit a high level of **community service**
- Despite scholarship aid, **debt** is still a concern
- 75% of alumni are **employed**
- The **mean gross salary** of those employed full-time is \$53,865, compared to the U.S. average of \$46,440



Vern Duwell, a Ford ReStart Scholarship recipient, is finishing his last term at Linn-Benton Community College to become an operating room radiology technologist. Health care is the most common work field for Ford ReStart and Ford Opportunity Scholars, according to the recent survey.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF VERN DUWELL

its support to graduate school a few years ago, Strickland returned to school for his degree in mental health counseling from Oregon State's University's Cascades campus. He graduated in 2013, and now works for the The Ford Family Foundation Scholarship Office as the student success counselor.

Non-traditional students like Strickland are the focus of two programs at the Foundation. The Ford ReStart Scholarship Program was created to encourage adults, age 25 or older, to begin or return to full-time post-secondary education. The Ford Opportunity Scholarship Program is designed for single parents who are seeking a bachelor's degree.

In 2014, the Foundation commissioned a study to examine the effects of the two

programs. Among the findings was evidence that the two scholarships have contributed to student success in the areas of college completion, less financial stress during college, gainful employment and participation in the community.

### 'significant challenges'

"This is not to say that everything is perfect," writes Irene Goodman of the Goodman Research Group. "A number still have significant challenges in their lives, yet most report that they feel better equipped to handle these because they overcame what they initially considered an insurmountable hurdle — successfully completing college."

Many of the findings resonate with Strickland, particularly the evidence that the scholarships have positively influenced

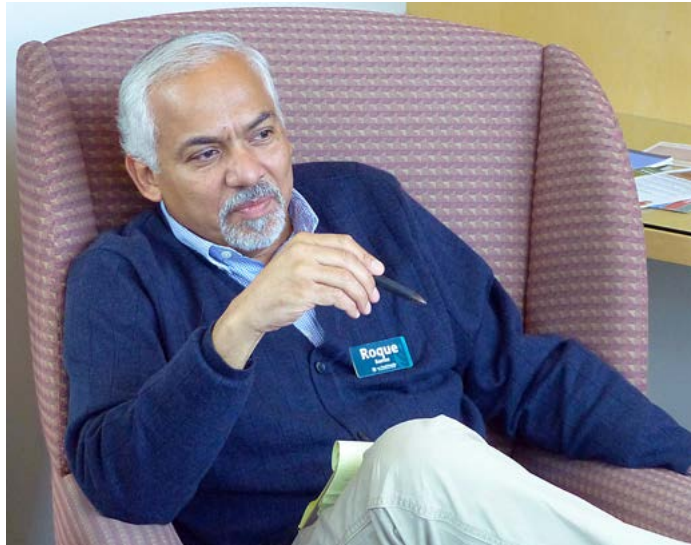
# Programs

how recipients view their own children's educational attainment. "I was not brought up in a college-going culture at all," he says. "But there was no doubt, after I went back to school, that my children were also going to go." Today, his grown daughters are college graduates and work as a nurse and a teacher.

Strickland counted the Foundation involvement as critical to his success. "Having that type of support and having someone step up and invest in me made a huge difference in my ability to succeed, and my ability to believe in my capabilities," he says. ■

**Returning to school after more than 30 years with a seventh-grade education was overwhelming. At the Ford awards banquet I saw many women in my situation. I learned I was not alone and that I did not have to figure everything out on my own. Someone saw my hopes and a group of people believed in me. That is what gave me the impetus to succeed.**

— Survey participant



**Roque Barros listens in a meeting with Foundation partners. Barros has worked as an adviser to communities nationwide on how to conduct resident-led work.**

## 'building relationships'

Roque Barros, new director for the Ford Institute, brings national experience to job

**T**wo weeks after starting his job, the new director of the Ford Institute for Community Building is a busy man. Roque Barros, a nonprofit executive with nearly 30 years experience in civic engagement, has been attending Foundation functions, learning the ropes in the office, and — most importantly — meeting people in the organization and out in the community.

People are at the crux of his philosophy. "The exciting part of my job is building relationships," Barros says. "Once we have those, we can really get into finding what kind of capacity is needed, to create the change that communities and residents are identifying that they want to make.

"I always tell people that my job is really to bring out the best in them. Sometimes there are folks that have been waiting for

someone to come knocking on their door, and eventually they realize they were really waiting for themselves."

Barros came to the Foundation in mid-January from Austin, Texas, where he served as vice president of community impact at Southwest Key Programs, a nonprofit that provides education, shelter and alternatives to incarceration for more than 200,000 youth and their families annually.

"There aren't many places that I know of that actually have an institute that focuses on community building," Barros says of his decision to come to the Foundation. "To go to a place that focuses on it, the way that the Foundation does, really interested me a lot."

As the new director of the Institute, Barros leads the Ford Institute Leadership Program and associated trainings. "Roque

[pronounced "Rocky"] has experience in civic engagement and community building that is exactly what we needed to build on the solid foundation in place today," says Anne Kubisch, president of The Ford Family Foundation. Barros stepped into the position after the retirement of Joyce Akse on March 1.

### No cookie cutters

Barros has worked as an adviser to communities nationwide on how to conduct resident-led work. While every town is different, Barros says the process of engaging communities is largely the same. "It's not a cookie-cutter approach," he says, "but I always start by building relationships, then capacity, then networks and partners, and then creating the change that people have identified as what they want to happen."

Barros hasn't seen a lot of Oregon yet, but he says he likes what he's seen so far. "I grew up in Calipatria, Calif., a small town of 3,000 people, so I really enjoy connecting with that again. Folks are very friendly in small communities, and you get to know a lot of people very quickly. It's been a lot of fun, and I'm looking forward to finding my bearings in Oregon. I love the landscape, it's beautiful." ■

**I always start by building relationships, then capacity, then networks and partners, and then creating the change that people have identified as what they want to happen.**

— Roque Barros

# From puppy raiser to veterinarian

A life-long dream becomes real for Maria Quiroz when she graduates this spring

**M**aria Quiroz has known since third grade that she wanted to be a veterinarian. She was the one always taking care of Sugar, the family's cat, along with assorted pets. She grew up marveling at the strength of the human-animal bond.

Her educational path crystallized in 2001, after she began training Ulysses, a yellow Labrador pup, for the Guide Dogs for the Blind program.

"I've always been a shy person, but Ulysses encouraged me to be more outgoing. When you walk down the road with a guide dog puppy, people have questions," Quiroz says. "He really helped me realize again my love for animals and that I wanted to go to veterinary school."

Her path may have been clear, but it wasn't easy. Acceptance into veterinary school is widely regarded as just as competitive as medical school, and total cost of attendance at an in-state school tops \$40,000 per year including tuition, room and board, books and supplies.

She had the desire, and a role model: her sister, Keela, the first person in her family to graduate from college.



Quiroz started college at Oregon State University in 2006, aided by the Scholarship Program for Sons and Daughters of Employees of Roseburg Forest Products Co. The program serves dependents (21 years of age or younger) of employees of RFP and offers \$5,000 per academic year if the recipient is enrolled in a four-year college or program (\$3,000 if enrolled in a two-year college or program).

## Roseburg Forest Products: A 'family business'

Roseburg Forest Products is sort of the family business: Quiroz's father, Robert Quiroz, is a 32-year employee; her uncles were employees, too, and her grandfather retired from there. "My sister and I were the first ones to go to college in our family," she says, "and probably the biggest help was the Sons and Daughters scholarship, which we both got. It took care

of such a big chunk. College is not cheap."

Her sister, who graduated from Oregon Institute of Technology in 2008, became a dental hygienist. Quiroz earned a bachelor's degree in animal science with a minor in chemistry in 2010, and was an alternate candidate for a year before embarking on her four-year education at OSU's College of Veterinary Medicine.

During her interim year, she took microbiology classes and continued to work at Willamette Veterinary Hospital, a job she started during her undergraduate years. "I am very grateful to have had that opportunity," Quiroz says. "They hired me with no experience and I worked my way up from cleaning kennels to nursing and hospitalized patient care. I did it not only for financial reasons, but it also helped me keep veterinary school in perspective."

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**My plan is to become a general practitioner in a small animal practice, hopefully in Oregon.**

—Maria Quiroz



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF MARIA QUIROZ

**Maria Quiroz, a recipient of a Ford Sons and Daughters scholarship, performs a neuter procedure on a cat. Quiroz will graduate this spring from Oregon State University's School of Veterinary Science.**

says. "Mom and Dad are still in Roseburg, and my sister and her family are in Medford."

**Strong family support**

Her family has strongly supported Quiroz's educational endeavors. "The college experience was foreign to my family, but my sister paved the way for me, and once my parents got into the college mindset, they were very supportive."

And Ulysses, the yellow Lab, was a big support as well. After he was withdrawn from the Guide Dogs program for health issues, Quiroz's family took him back as a pet. She visited Ulysses on breaks from school. When he became sick with lymphoma at 8 years old, she took care of him at the veterinary hospital where she worked, assisting in his surgery and helping with supportive care at the end.

"It was another experience Ulysses helped me through, another teaching opportunity," Quiroz says reflectively. "I think about him often; he made a lasting impression on my life." ■

**Top: In 2001 Maria Quiroz raised Ulysses, a Labrador retriever puppy for Guide Dogs for the Blind. The experience helped confirm her choice to become a veterinarian.**

**Bottom: In 2010, Maria spent a day at the beach with Ulysses, just a month before he succumbed to lymphoma. She provided some of his supportive veterinary care at the end.**



## Book Review: Resilience

*Continued from page 16*

they occur, is not sustainable, Rodin says. Sustainability only comes when organizations move from a reactive to a proactive stance. "Investing in resilience can achieve multiple wins—the resilience dividend, as we call it," Rodin says, "that not only prepares a city to bounce back after disaster, but can impact its economic development, community cohesion, and ecosystems management every day."

In Medellin, leaders focused on a single vulnerability that, if addressed, would help the city enable its citizens to pursue new livelihoods as businesses came in. The vulnerability was identified as the extreme isolation of Medellin's poorest neighborhoods. "Disconnected communities can't pool resources and have a hard time coming together in groups and are thus more vulnerable to being threatened, bullied, terrorized, and taken over by gangs," Rodin explains.

Medellin's solution was to design and build an extensive public transportation system, including an escalator system in the San Javier barrio that turned a trip into the city from a 30-minute hike into a five-minute glide.

**Tulsa flood**

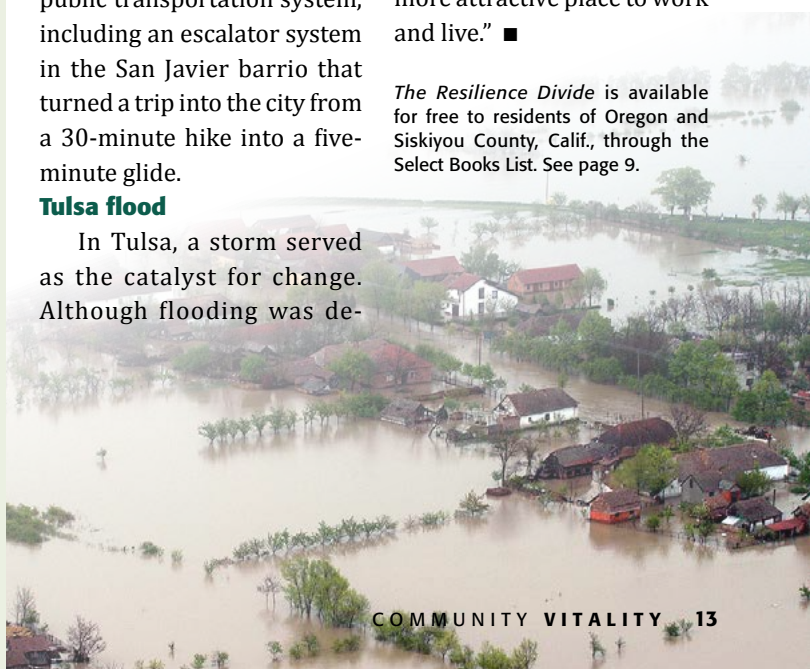
In Tulsa, a storm served as the catalyst for change. Although flooding was de-

pressingly common in the city, the flood of 1984 was especially damaging, dumping 15 inches of rainfall in the city over a couple of hours. Failing infrastructure led to widespread flooding, which in turn resulted in 14 deaths, the destruction of 7,000 buildings, and a \$400 million relief and rebuilding tab.

Community leaders from all sectors came together and crafted a grassroots plan for lasting change. Over the next two decades, they completed a variety of flood mitigation measures, from establishing parks in floodplains to developing comprehensive building and drainage regulations.

"...Tulsans have built their resilience and are now realizing the dividend," Rodin says. "They enjoy the lowest flood insurance rates in the United States, which frees up resources for other endeavors, and national recognition as a community capable of successfully building resilience, which makes Tulsa an even more attractive place to work and live." ■

*The Resilience Divide* is available for free to residents of Oregon and Siskiyou County, Calif., through the Select Books List. See page 9.



# How one Oregon town got its fish back

## Port Orford program strengthens local economy, supplies community with fish

Taken in part from an article by Eve Andrews, which first appeared at [grist.org](http://grist.org). Used with permission.

Port Orford, population just over 1,100, is the westernmost city in the contiguous United States. For those even somewhat familiar with geography, that means the town is perched right on the Pacific Ocean, which logically should mean its residents are swimming (pun intended) in an endless supply of delicious, fresh fish.

Not so fast.

“It’s been somewhat of a food desert for fish here, believe it or not,” says Leesa Cobb, executive director of Port Orford Sustainable Seafood ([posustainableseafood.com](http://posustainableseafood.com)).

“The model has been that our boats pull up to the dock, [corporate] buyers buy our fish, and then the fish goes up the hill. None of it is retained in our community. It’s not processed here; it’s not packaged here; it’s not sold here. And that’s been going on for years and years and years — up until we started making it available.”

Aaron Longton, a commercial fisherman, started Port Orford Sustainable Seafood in 2009 by selling seafood in the Rogue Valley from an ice chest out of the back of his truck. In 2011, the organization expanded to include Oregon’s first Community-Supported Fishery.

A CSA is based on the Community-Supported Agriculture model that has been around

for decades. A CSA is an association of individuals who pledge to support one or more local farms, with growers and consumers sharing the risks and benefits of food production.

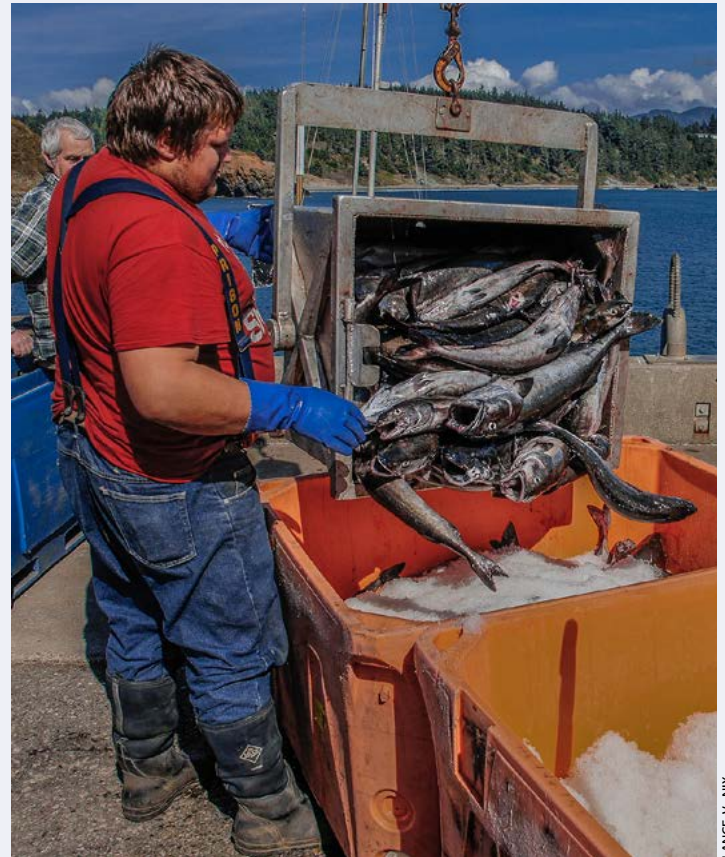
According to Cobb, the Community-Supported Fishery program in Port Orford was launched for three reasons: to strengthen the local fishing economy, supply the local community with fish, and work to conserve the regional ocean ecosystem.

### Portland to Ashland

Port Orford Sustainable Seafood buys fish from roughly a third of the 40 fishing boats in Port Orford, which it then distributes to customers from Portland to the Rogue Valley. The small day boats fish hook-and-line, year-round.

The majority of the seafood that Americans eat comes from farms overseas while we export our domestically caught, wild fish. As a result, there’s very little rapport between communities and their local food supplies (therefore, little motivation to care for said supplies), huge amounts of fossil fuels are expended in transporting farmed fish from halfway across the world, and no one even has a clue *what* kind of fish they’re putting in their mouths.

Community-Supported Fishery programs, like the one in Port Orford, are beginning to change this system in favor of local ecosystems and the people who depend on them. ■



A commercial fisherman unloads black cod at Port Orford in Curry County. The fish is one the many species brought in to supply Port Orford Sustainable Seafood.

### How does the Port Orford Community-Supported Fishery work?

A CSF share equates to a stake in Port Orford’s family-owned fishing businesses. The small day boats fish hook-and-line, year-round, to harvest a sustainable array of seafood including Pacific halibut, Chinook salmon, Dungeness crab, rockfish, sablefish and albacore tuna.

### What’s in a Port Orford CSF share?

A monthly CSF share includes all major types of seafood caught in Port Orford. The fishing vessels — like all commercial fishing vessels — occasionally have incident-

tal catches, which may include spiny dogfish, skate or wolf eel. Some of these species may be included in the seafood share, along with recipes to cook them. All of the species are flash frozen in accordance with government regulations.

### Where are shares picked up?

Port Orford Sustainable Seafood has monthly drop-off sites throughout the state: Port Orford, Bandon, Coos Bay, Roseburg, Eugene, Corvallis, Salem, Beaverton, Portland, Cave Junction, Grants Pass, Jacksonville, Eagle Point, Medford and Ashland. ■

For prices and more information: [posustainableseafood.com](http://posustainableseafood.com)

# Weed moves into the recovery phase

Continued from page 3

berg said at an employee meeting shortly after the fire. “They voluntarily chose to fight the fire at the mill, some knowing that their own homes were going up in flames.”

A week after the fire, company CEO Allyn Ford put 60 Weed employees to work at RFP mills in Douglas County, providing them with housing and meals assistance. They returned to work in Weed in early October, about six weeks ahead of schedule.

Technically a casualty of the fire, Weed nonprofit Great Northern Services didn’t act much like a victim. When its building burned down, the organization, which provides assistance to low-income families, quickly found a temporary location. Within three days, it was operating an emergency food warehouse.

The ultra-fast arrival of first responders has also drawn praise. “We will be forever grateful to the tremendous efforts of all firefighters and others who saved our home and so many others,” says Stewart, the Ford Opportunity Scholar. Her home is on Main Street, an area of focus for firefighters. Her mother’s house in Angel Valley, saved by a timely fire retardant drop, was one house away from a blocks-long area of devastation. “My youngest son, Malachi, now aspires to fly one of the planes that drops the retardant,” Stewart says.

## Coping with recovery

Six months after the fire, the Weed community is well into



PHOTOS: CINDY CHEFFEY

**Homes are now springing up in Weed as the recovery takes hold. Nearly 40 nonprofit groups are expected to help with rebuilding.**

the recovery phase. The Weed Long Term Recovery Group helps community members affected by the fire connect with local resources, including insurance education, rental assistance, tax reporting information, and help with necessities such as heat.

The Resource Center staff is busy with new challenges, as they complete construction assessments and help guide people to the correct resources. “A lot of people are trying to navigate insurance policies,” Ochs says. “Some people don’t want to see a contractor yet.

Even now, we just referred someone to a therapist.”

It’s a long time until recovery is complete, and no one knows when that will be, or how successful it will end up. When Ochs looks out the window of the Resource Center, though, she doesn’t see the blackened fire debris, or the vacant lot where her house once stood. She sees the town as it will be in a few months. “Weed is going to be extremely active,” she says. “We have 37 groups coming in to help with the rebuilding efforts — lots of worker bees, lots of people helping rebuild some of those houses where people were underinsured.

“A ton of little ants swarming all over town,” she says with satisfaction. ■

Cover fire photo: Virginia Becker, American Red Cross volunteer. Cover building photo: Cindy Cheffey.



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF INSURANCE

**Three days after the disaster the community gathered with first responders to discuss the recovery.**

BOOK REVIEW

# Catastrophic challenges

Author makes a case for why being able to bounce back is an urgent social and economic issue

*"...I have also become convinced that the resilience dividend is real and achievable, and provides great opportunities to improve lives and livelihoods in the good times as well."*

– Judith Rodin  
*The Resilience Dividend*

What do the towns of Medellin, Colombia, and Tulsa, Okla., have in common? More than you might think.

A few years back, each town was facing its own kind of crisis. Medellin was widely considered to be the drug and murder capital of South America. Tulsa was dealing with a longstanding flooding problem. Today, they have something else in common – success. Each proved successful in rebounding from adverse conditions and in rebuilding so it never happens again.

Building resilience—the ability to bounce back more

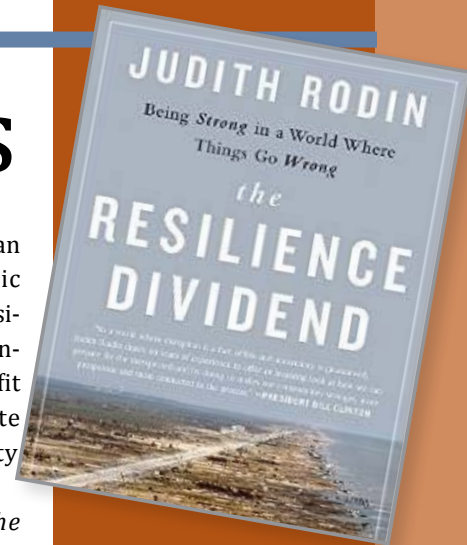
quickly and effectively—is an urgent social and economic issue. Judith Rodin is the president of the Rockefeller Foundation, a New York nonprofit with a mission to promote the well being of humanity throughout the world.

Rodin's new book, *The Resilience Dividend: Being Strong in a World Where Things Go Wrong*, offers readers a wide range of examples that illustrate how people, organizations, businesses, communities, and cities have developed resilience in the face of otherwise catastrophic challenges.

"Our interconnected world is susceptible to sudden and dramatic shocks and stresses," Rodin says. "[It could be] a cyber-attack, a new strain of virus, a structural failure, a violent storm, a civil disturbance, an economic blow."

The status quo, where we tackle these problems after

*Continued on page 13*



## Yours for the asking

See page 9.



**THE Ford Family  
FOUNDATION**

### MISSION

Successful citizens and vital rural communities

### CORE VALUES

**Integrity:** Promoting and acknowledging principled behavior

**Stewardship:** Responsibility to give back and accountability for resources and results

**Respect:** Valuing all individuals

**Independence:** Encouraging self-reliance and initiative

**Community:** Working together for positive change