

I am a graduate of Yale SOM, class of 1981. I am writing to nominate Martine Singer, SOM class of 1989 to be a Donaldson Fellow. In short, Martine would be an outstanding addition to the Donaldson Fellow program. Having been a long time friend of both Martine and Bill Donaldson, who personally convinced me to attend SOM, I can say without hesitation that Martine should become a Donaldson Fellow.

Martine Singer '89, currently the President and CEO of Children's Institute in Los Angeles, has devoted the past 20 years to public service. A graduate of Sarah Lawrence, she worked in investment banking where I first met her in 1983. When she decided to get an MBA, I am proud to say she followed my advice to attend SOM over Wharton, Columbia and NYU, where she was given a full scholarship, because I knew then that she was able to flourish in private, public and nonprofit organizations and would have a rich career moving among those sectors.

After graduation she joined *The New York Times*, and within two years was publisher of its first foreign edition (in Russian). After moving to Los Angeles in 1991, she joined *Los Angeles Times*, where as Director of Business Development she launched its first online service, the precursor to latimes.com. However despite her professional accomplishments on Wall Street and in large media companies, she found her work fundamentally unsatisfying. She took a leap, dropped out of the business world and began volunteering at Hollygrove, a former orphanage where Marilyn Monroe had lived as a child, near her home in Los Angeles.

Hollygrove had become a therapeutic residential facility, and it was there that Martine found her passion for working with traumatized children from marginal communities. She volunteered in the on-grounds special education classroom, working one-on-one with kids that were several grade levels behind because of their trauma history and multiple foster care placements. She was especially touched by one highly active 9-year-old girl, who spent more time being sent out of the classroom than in it. Traditional approaches were ineffective, but Martine knew this girl loved gymnastics and found that she read very attentively if she was standing on her head.

At the same time, she was spotted by the agency's executive director, who recognized Martine's ability to advise on strategy and business planning; her financial and analytical skills complemented those of the social workers and educators that tend to manage human services nonprofits. At the same time, child welfare practice was evolving and fewer children were being placed in residential treatment, particularly the younger children that Hollygrove served. Martine wrote a business plan, adopted by the board of directors, that involved closing the 125-year old residential program, merging with a larger and more stable agency based in Northern California, and serving at-risk children living in poverty in the nearby Hollywood community with mental health and other supportive services. In this time she went from volunteer to Chief Operating Officer of Hollygrove, and, after the merger, Executive Director of the Los Angeles region for what's now Pacific Clinics.

In 2012, she became President and Chief Executive Officer of Para Los Niños, a nonprofit agency based in LA's Skid Row serving a similar demographic. There Martine oversaw not only the mental health, child welfare and youth workforce development programs, but also six preschools and three charter schools. She was also faced with an organization that, while vital to its constituents and beloved in the community, was financially unstable: heavily leveraged and without cash reserves. Additionally, the charter schools that now served 1,100 students suffered from lack

of investment and leadership and needed considerable infrastructure to improve academic performance and attract talented teachers. In four years Martine right-sized PLN's program mix, increased cash reserves to \$4 million and attracted strong and experienced school leaders. She also refocused the agency's mental health services on the students in its own schools and preschools, creating a community school model to serve the multiple and complex needs of families living in poverty, suffering from community and family violence, and lacking access to suitable housing, medical care and employment opportunities.

Children's Institute, which Martine joined in late 2016, is more than twice the size of PLN, with revenues of \$102 million and a workforce of 1,000. With 38 locations in distressed communities like Watts, Compton and Wilmington, CII serves 24,000 children and families each year. CII has been a leader in evidence-based practices for children and families experiencing the effects of trauma and also trains some 4,000 professionals annually. In the first three years of her tenure, Martine created a strategic plan, in partnership with Bridgespan, that resulted in the single largest grant from a private foundation: \$5 million from New York-based Edna McConnell Clark Foundation. Other major funders include Steve and Connie Ballmer, the Weingart Foundation, the Ralph M. Parsons Foundation, the Otis Booth Foundation, the Ahmanson Foundation and many others.

In addition to overseeing CII's operations, Martine took over a capital campaign for a building project that had stalled. Frank Gehry had designed a 50,000 square foot campus for CII in Watts, but Martine believed the building was too large, ostentatious and expensive. She prevailed on the architect and the board to reduce the footprint to 20,000 square feet, which enabled CII to fully fund construction without taking on any new debt. She reimagined the building not just as offices and program space for CII, but as a sanctuary for local partners – nonprofits, government agencies and residents. They broke ground in January 2020, just before the March pandemic lockdown, yet construction proceeded without delay and under budget. The building opened to the public in June 2022, and has since welcomed some 70 organizations that provide programming and activities that extend or complement CII's own services. The project has also attracted new investment to Watts, with Kaiser Permanente building a large medical office building next door, bringing jobs and services to this very underserved area of Los Angeles.

Martine oversaw a second strategic plan that was approved by the board in 2022 and that positions CII for success in a dramatically shifting healthcare landscape in California. She has diversified the agency's revenues, now contracting with six managed care plans in addition to county-contracted mental health services, and reorganized its leadership around three target populations to better partner with primary care. She inaugurated an annual gala that over the past 5 years has raised more than \$10 million for operations and launched a government relations and advocacy team to extend CII's reach and influence beyond its direct services

Throughout her nonprofit career, Martine has championed the rights of families, including many immigrants, to access educational and other opportunities and narrow the achievement gap for children born into communities with high rates of poverty and violence. She is an advocate for people exposed to adverse childhood experiences, also known as ACEs, which can have devastating and long-term impact on brain development, executive functioning, behavioral health and even physical health. She is involved in legislative advocacy at the local, state and federal levels on issues ranging from universal home visiting and school readiness to comprehensive mental health and other student and family supports in schools, as well as nonprofit sustainability. She is quoted

in the media and sought after as a public speaker. She has led diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives at the agency and at the board level.

She is widely admired as an exceptional nonprofit leader in Los Angeles, and was selected as a Senior Fellow at USC's Marshall School of Business — Brittingham Social Enterprise Lab. In 2022 she received the Frances Riker Davis award for public service from The Brearley School in New York. She is a member of CNBC's CEO Council and serves on the boards of Eisner Health, the California Council of Community Behavioral Health Agencies and Wise Readers to Leaders.

In summary, Martine would be an excellent addition to the Donaldson Fellow program and I heartily endorse her candidacy. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I may provide any additional support for Martine's candidacy.

Your attention to this matter is much appreciated. Additionally, please acknowledge the receipt of this email.