



Director Steven Spielberg has created a new foundation, the Oskar Schindler Foundation, which will direct profits from his hit movie "Schindler's List" to Jewish causes.

Community pioneers  
**Farmworker advocates win foundation award**

Two key staff members of the Tri-County Community Health Center in Eastern North Carolina are recipients of a \$100,000 award from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Community Health Leadership Program. Michael Baker and Harold Hunter were among 11 health-care providers from around the country who were selected for this year's awards.

BY BARBARA SOLOW

Newton Grove

In the nearly 10 years he has spent as executive director of the Tri-County Community Health Center in rural Eastern North Carolina, Michael Baker has learned to value every connection.

"You have to build bridges with every group," he says. "You can't just work with the migrant farmworkers and have no relationship at all with the growers. You need relationships with everyone."

Baker's efforts to provide health care to poor and migrant farmworkers have captured the attention of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, a leading national health-care funder.

Baker and his colleague Harold Hunter - who runs the center's substance-abuse program - were among 11 health-care providers from throughout the U.S. chosen to receive awards from the New Jersey-based foundation's Community Health Leadership Program.

The program gives out 10 annual awards of \$100,000 each to people working in community health-care settings.

"The kind of people we're looking for are people who are inspirational," says Elizabeth Bartle, director of communications for the foundation's leadership program. "People who are working against seemingly insurmountable obstacles and people who are creative - who can do a lot with a little."

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Award-winning author Allan Gurganus was the celebrity guest at a fundraiser last month for the "Southern Outlook" project at the Fund for Southern Communities. The project provides grants to gay and lesbian organizations in Georgia and the Carolinas.

Photo by John Fletcher Jr.

Imagining a difference  
**Tar Heel author returns to help build community**

BY BARBARA SOLOW

Allan Gurganus believes that the best path to becoming a novelist is learning to walk in someone else's shoes.

"The role of the artist is to become everybody - to explain that it is possible to imagine another life," says the award-winning fiction writer.

His own lessons in empathy began during his childhood in Rocky Mount.

"In the 1950s and '60s, the town was 60 percent black and 40 percent white," Gurganus says. "There was always an awareness that we were visibly outnumbered. That double-ness was always in my head."

Growing up gay provided a window on another kind of duality.

"I used to read newspaper articles about the small-town-boys-made-good" in the arts world, Gurganus says. "I knew reading between the lines that these unmarried men who lived with their dog and lifelong partner - it was code" for homosexuality.

His books have explored the often subterranean issues of gender, race and sexuality.

Gurganus' critically-acclaimed

first novel, "The Last Confederate Widow Tells All" is told from the point of view of an uneducated, elderly woman with a keen sense of what he calls "village justice." A television miniseries based on the novel had been nominated for an Emmy Award.

"White People," which won the 1991 Los Angeles Times Book Award for fiction, is a collection of stories that reflect on such universal themes as youth, loss, self-denial

and history.

As a young adult, Gurganus studied painting. It wasn't until he was drafted to fight in the Vietnam War that he started writing.

Vietnam "was a politicizing experience and a devastating experience," he says. "For the first time in my life, I was the underdog. I started to write in journals - mimicking the novels I was reading by Henry James and Jane Austen. The obligation to become other than myself was a welcome experience because I felt so isolated."

After years of shuttling back and forth between North Carolina and New York City, Gurganus recently decided to become a permanent Tar

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Finding a seat at the table

## Foundations aim to boost funding for lesbians and gays

The "Southern Outlook" grants program at The Fund for Southern Communities is part of a national effort to increase funding for gay issues. The program was launched with support from the Joyce Mertz-Gilmore Foundation in New York, which is part of the newly-formed National Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership.

BY BARBARA SOLOW

Durham

The Fund for Southern Communities is spearheading efforts to boost support for gay and lesbian organizations in the South.

Last month, the Atlanta-based foundation held a fundraiser in Durham for its "Southern Outlook" project, which provides grants to organizations working to end prejudice and discrimination against gays.

The project - launched last year with \$25,000 in matching funds from the Joyce Mertz-Gilmore Foundation - already has awarded \$50,000 in grants to such organizations as the Gay and Straight Alliance in Chapel Hill and North Carolina Lesbian and Gay Pride in Charlotte.

John Bell, the fund's North Carolina coordinator, says Southern Outlook provides support to groups that have been overlooked by the vast majority of funders.

### CIVIL RIGHTS

"This is a conservative region and that's reflected in the grants of most foundations and support from the United Way," he says. "We feel like we're one of the few organizations out there specifically saying that gay and lesbian rights are civil rights. For that reason, we have always funded these groups."

The Southern Outlook program parallels a new initiative aimed at putting gay and lesbian issues on the national funding agenda.

The Gilmore foundation is the biggest contributor to the National Lesbian and Gay Community Funding Partnership - a project of the Tides Foundation in San Francisco.

In its first round of funding this fall, the partnership will award

nearly \$500,000 in matching grants to community foundations for programs for lesbians and gays. A total of \$1 million will be awarded over the next three years.

Nancy Cunningham, executive director of the national partnership, says the grants program is needed to fill gaps in traditional foundation support.

"Significantly less than 1 percent of [foundation] funding in this country goes to non-AIDS lesbian and gay projects and programs," she says. "Since community foundations have been established to serve the entire community they are located in, we felt they were the best vehicle to try and disseminate this money."

None of North Carolina's com-

Look for **PROJECT**, page 7

### BRIEFLY

**Foundation targets poverty**

The Southeastern Council on Foundations is planning a new project to help close the gap between the haves and have-nots in the Southeast. Called the Southeastern Community Leadership Project, it will focus support on community foundations. Call Bob Hull or Martin Lehfeldt at (404) 524-0911.

**Johnson foundation seeks health projects**

The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation in Princeton, N.J., is providing matching funds for community health projects. \$500,000 matching grants will be awarded to projects that increase access to basic health care; improve services for people with chronic conditions; and reduce harm from tobacco, alcohol and illegal drugs. Call (202) 994-6223.

**Kenan Institute expands MBA Enterprise Corps**

The Frank Hawkins Kenan Institute of Private Enterprise in Chapel Hill expanded its MBA Enterprise Corps program sending MBA graduates to Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania and Tanzania. The program already operates in Hungary, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Ghana, Uganda, Indonesia and China.

**Virginia college meets Kenan Trust challenge**

Hollins College in Roanoke, Va., has exceeded its first-year goal in the "Kenan Challenge" by more than \$1 million. The challenge, issued by the William R. Kenan Jr. Charitable Trust of Chapel Hill, asks colleges to raise \$3 million over three years in new endowment money in order to receive a \$1.5 million grant.

**Gender, giving linked**

Women in Philanthropy and the Boston Women's Fund have produced a report that shows programs for women and girls are an underfunded area of nonprofit activity. Their study recommends that foundations try to bring a "gender lens" to grantmaking. Call Molly Mead at the Lincoln Filene Center, Tufts University, (617) 627-3453.

**Hospice hosts annual conference**

Hospice for the Carolinas held its 18th annual conference last month in Greenville, South Carolina. Conference sessions focused on new trends and research projects that hospices can use when working with children, nursing home patients, AIDS patients and their families.