



Metropolitan Group

the power of voice

2017 REPORT TO STAKEHOLDERS

29 YEARS OF SOCIAL IMPACT

Proudly working with change agents across the U.S. and Mexico

Dear Friends and Stakeholders,

February 14, 2018

2017 was a year of change. Many of the issues our clients and our team are champions for, including immigration, human rights, racial justice, environmental protection, health equity and others, saw increased challenges. The narrative of division and the increased use of the framing of fear have impacted trust in facts, science, media and even within each other. But we saw these challenges as catalysts for an awe-inspiring coming together of people and movements. Social impact leaders, organizations and communities doubled-down on their commitments to the protection of people and places, and showed their determination for social change in new and creative ways.

As we hit the ground running in 2018, we are even more resolute in our belief that amplifying the voices of change agents is a critical support to the ability to drive social change and to advance a more just and sustainable world. We are privileged to work on the issues we care about, to be inspired by the vision of our clients, and to learn every day from the communities we serve. We are proud of our talented staff who bring conviction, creativity and their collaborative spirit to the work every day.

We were founded 29 years ago today. On this occasion, we take a moment to reflect on the previous year, share highlights, and share appreciation of you—our dedicated clients, partners and friends.

Together, we are working on some of the most pressing issues of our time with clients who are leading the fight on climate change, health equity and access, protection of our natural resources, reproductive health, human rights, addressing systemic racism, and championing of mental health and wellbeing.

Here are just a few examples:

- Together with **Voices for Healthy Kids** at the **American Heart Association**, we are ensuring that health policies benefit people with the greatest health or economic need. We developed values-based messages that motivate policy decision-makers—on both sides of the aisle—to write policies that focus on change that will have the greatest impact.
voicesforhealthykids.org/healthequity
- We were proud to work with **Power to Decide** (formerly the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy) to develop and launch its new brand and website, shifting the narrative from deficit to opportunity and better engaging its key stakeholders.
powertodecide.org



- **Audubon Society of Portland** is much more than a chapter dedicated to the protection of birds—it's an advocacy organization that is engaging all of Oregon on issues like environmental protection and climate change. We are working with the organization to help communicate its brand and mission.
- We continue to work with the **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation** to train leaders to use their talents to make communities healthier places for all people. We recruit people from every sector and field to join RWJF's leadership programs, and share stories about the magic that happens when they collaborate to create change. rwjf.org/leadershipforbetterhealth
- **Reclaiming Native Truth:** A Project to Dispel America's Myths and Misperceptions has set a vision that Native peoples will be visible, valued and respected. MG joined forces with this powerful national initiative to replace the current dominant narrative about Native peoples—largely set by others—with one that counters invisibility and allows Americans to understand the real story of Native contributions to this country, present and past.
- Through **Creating Connection**, a joint project we created with **Arts Midwest**, we are building the capacity of thousands of arts organizations nationwide to shift the narrative and make creative expression a valued and expected part of daily life.
- We are working with the **Ford Foundation** and civil society leaders in Mexico on deep stakeholder research and development of new narratives to advance human rights.
- In Chicago, we worked with the **Ann and Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital**, the **Preventing Alcohol Abuse in Chicago Teens (PAACT) coalition**, and the **State of Illinois** to create a campaign to prevent underage drinking. Research showed that teens drink less than people (including teens) think. As a result, we created a campaign to affirm the social norm that already exists and bolster resilience to prevent or reduce teen drinking. The [I got this!](#) campaign has recently launched citywide.
- We worked with the **Well Being Trust**, a newly formed organization promoting mental, social and spiritual health, to launch a seminal report on the state of the drug, alcohol and suicide crisis in the U.S., and engaged national media to bring attention to this issue and to reframe it as a clarion call for integrated health and a culture of well-being.
- **Para La Naturaleza** hired MG a few years ago to develop a 10-year strategic plan to help students, families, teachers, businesses and policymakers support a renewed Caribbean-wide commitment to nature. PLN successfully implemented the first five-year strategy and helped pass policy that maps out a plan to meet the critical resiliency and ecosystem sustainability goal of having 25 percent of land in conservation. In 2017, they reengaged MG to assess the progress made to date, and establish priorities for the next five years.
- Despite a reduced enrollment period, we worked with OregonHealthCare.gov's new *Community of Servers* approach and helped exceed enrollment in the health plan from the previous year, ensuring more people have access to health care.



Impacto Social Metropolitan Group

2017 was a big year for MG. About this time last year, we launched our latest endeavor—our sister company in Mexico City, Impacto Social Metropolitan Group. We have an incredible team of thought leaders who bring a wealth of experience in public health, human rights, environmental and social justice strategy, and communication. In its first year, Impacto Social has worked on advancing support for human rights and integration of midwifery into health services. We are also excited by the team's work to refine strategic communication for social change models and approaches with cultural context.

Our commitment to equity and inclusion

As a company committed to equity, diversity and inclusion, we know that diverse backgrounds, experiences and cultures strengthen our work and our workplace. In fact, we cannot do our work effectively without a deep commitment to equity among ourselves in a workplace that encourages diverse perspectives. We seek to authentically engage with clients and stakeholders and to learn from and seek better understanding of cultural context. We want to have meaningful dialogue aimed at empowering individuals to speak their truth, share powerful stories and help drive social change.

We apply the same commitment to our staff, and we strive to create a more multicultural workplace through greater recognition, understanding and appreciation of a broad range of differences among individuals and groups. We achieve this through recruitment and retention of diverse staff, vendors and of-counsel experts, and by encouraging regular multicultural development of MG team members. In 2017, we continued a series of workshops to incorporate an equity lens into our work, our workplace and our lives, using outside expert trainers with diverse perspectives. We will continue these workshops for our staff throughout 2018. We also made adjustments to internal policies to better align with our commitment to equity based on staff suggestions and feedback. As a company that values transparency, we will continue to solicit feedback from our staff and continue our work every day to better serve our clients and create an inclusive culture for our staff.

We walk the talk

MG was among the first companies to be certified as a B Corporation in 2010. Distinguishing ourselves as a certified B Corp means that we voluntarily meet rigorous international standards of social and environmental performance, accountability and transparency. In 2017, for the fourth year in a row, MG was recognized by the international nonprofit B Lab with their Best for the World designation. MG is proud to be recognized and to be among such amazing peers as one of 150 companies worldwide with the greatest social impact. [View our B Impact Assessment.](#)

Our ideas for change

From health equity, to climate change, to challenging false narratives and building public will, in 2017, we weighed in on key issues that affect us all. Last spring, we released an article by our strategic communication practice leader Kevin Kirkpatrick published in the Stanford Social Innovation Review entitled "[Changing the False Narrative That Conflates Gun Violence and Mental Illness: Why America needs a proactive, focused, comprehensive, and sustained strategy that decouples the issues of gun violence and mental health, and reframes the national dialogue about both.](#)"



In June, we hosted our third Leaders Roundtable on Climate Change attended by representatives from foundations, nonprofits and public agencies as an opportunity to brainstorm on where, together, we can create the most impact to influence the intersection of climate, public health and equity.

Throughout the year, Jennifer Messenger Heilbronner, MG's Public Health Lead, gave several talks, hosted webinars and was invited to speak at the Centers for Disease Control to discuss [Promoting Health Equity in 3D](#)—MG's thought piece on incorporating equity into public health work.

And, for the first time ever, we were excited to release our approach to [public will building in Spanish](#), using specific examples from a Mexican context on what public will building looks like outside the U.S.

In our communities

Every year, our team works for social change by day, and volunteers their free time too. We are proud of our team's service and dedication to the communities in which we live and work as board members and volunteers. In 2017, our team volunteered over 2000 hours for 30 organizations and causes and, as volunteers, helped raise more than \$400,000 in service of the issues they care about.

New Staff & Promotions

In 2017, MG welcomed several new staff and promoted current staff.

Kristi Garwood

Executive Assistant

Candace Johnson

promoted to Senior Associate

Jenny Mau

Executive Assistant

Tanja Miljević

Executive Assistant

Ginelle Perez

promoted to Traffic Manager

Zach Ward

Associate

Thank you

We are privileged every day to work with leading change agents across the country and in Mexico. Thank you to our [2017 Clients](#). You change the world.

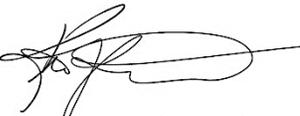
Sincerely,


Eric Friedenwald-Fishman


Laura K. Lee Dellinger


Maria Elena Campisteguy


Al Machemehl


Kevin T. Kirkpatrick

