Excerpts from

“A Reflection on Why Social Networks Are Critical to Sustainable Change”
Featuring Audrey Jordan with AECF (2006)

“People are drawn to this way of thinking about community change work. They begin to see that this kind of social network is fundamental to the realization of transformation.”

“Social networks tend to be invisible and taken for granted. We wanted to find ways to describe them and communicate why they can be such a valuable resource, in and of themselves, but also as a way to build social capital. This then leads to accumulation of other kinds of capital, such as economic capital.”

“Strengthening social networks is not a thing, or a program, or an institute. It’s an approach. It’s an approach that needs to be part of everything we do. The challenge is that it takes time to build a social networks approach, and many people “don’t get the importance of what the groups that are successfully using a social networks approach are doing. It is not easy to examine or measure. Yes, it takes more time. Things that take a little more time, like social network development, are a challenge in this environment.

“We are making the case that emphasizing a social network approach can really broaden and deepen the results that occur in the sites, and that results can last longer and for more people. It can allow our works to reach the people we aspire to reach, which are the most vulnerable families, whom are seldom if ever reached by more traditional initiatives.”