

## Building and Leveraging Brand for Effective Social Marketing

### Situation

It was shortly after the Rodney King riots in Los Angeles in 1992 when institutional and business leaders from throughout Fresno came together to form the Fresno Leadership Foundation. This organization was created to address the needs of the community inside the city's toughest neighborhoods. Without a strategic plan, many were convinced that Fresno would be the next city to experience a tragedy like the LA Riots.

A cohesive organization evolved, committed to the inclusion of all people regardless of race, religion, economic status; one that championed the leadership ability of the people within their own neighborhoods. The challenge was to create an organization — worthy of funding — to foster reconciliation throughout the city of Fresno.

The development of a brand and effective, relevant communication was critical to establishing a citywide connection and inspire all neighborhoods to act by volunteering, advocating for and financially supporting the work. Linda Gleason was brought on board to direct an all-volunteer team of marketing professionals to develop and execute the marketing effort.

### Approach

The first phase of the project involved a name change for the organization. Fresno Leadership Foundation became One by One Leadership with a mission to change the soul of the city — one person, one leader, one neighborhood at a time.

A semi-annual magazine was developed that was distributed both in the city of Fresno and nationally. The magazine, *The Soul of Our City*, told real stories about the individuals encountered as a result of the work and the outcomes. These stories gave a face and a name to people often disenfranchised, highlighting their willingness to turn their situation around when presented with opportunities. These widely publicized stories gave voice to the organization and held it accountable to the relationships it was creating and to the outcomes it was promising.

Newspaper ads and radio public service announcements were designed and developed for the local publications and stations. Each ad articulated a facet of the mission and the work, proclaiming the following headlines:

"Anyone who doesn't believe the heart of our city can be saved, hasn't felt its pulse."

"The answers to this city's problems don't have to be found, they were never lost."

"Does our city have a soul?"

Regular e-mail communication was sent to an extensive database that showcased successes and continued to share the realizations of dreams in pockets of poverty-stricken neighborhoods that are so often neglected. Annual events were held to showcase the work, honor the stakeholders, champion new perspectives on poverty and raise support.

### Results

In just a little over five years, One by One Leadership, a member of the Leadership Foundation of America, became the flagship Leadership Foundation in the country. During this time \$1.85 million in local dollars and \$5 million in outside amounting to almost \$6.9 million dollars had been released into the community focused on one by one transformation.