

Speech delivered by  
**Cleo F. Wilson**

**Executive Director, Playboy Foundation  
VP of Public Affairs, Playboy Enterprises**



Presented at the  
**2004 HANDY L. LINDSEY, JR. AWARD & LECTURE  
ON INCLUSIVENESS IN PHILANTHROPY**

**June 15, 2004**

Hosted by  
**Chicago African Americans in Philanthropy  
& Donors Forum Chicago**

The Handy L. Lindsey, Jr. Award and Lecture on Inclusiveness in Philanthropy was established by Chicago African Americans in Philanthropy in 2003 in honor of one of Chicago's philanthropic leaders for racial and ethnic diversity and inclusiveness in the field.

Chicago African Americans in Philanthropy (CAAIP) is a membership organization of African American trustees and staff of philanthropic institutions. It functions to: encourage philanthropy in the African American community; research and encourage the development of grantmaking programs at all foundations which benefit the community; encourage dialogue between philanthropic organizations and agencies serving African American communities; and partner with individuals and organizations who share our commitment to promote healthy African American communities.

## **INTRODUCTION of Cleo F. Wilson – by Handy L. Lindsey, Jr.**

Cleo F. (Francine) Wilson develops, implements and oversees charitable activities and corporate affairs programs, including leading the Playboy Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Playboy Enterprises. In addition to directing the Hugh M. Hefner First Amendment Awards program, she oversaw the establishment of the Freedom of Expression Award at the annual Sundance Film Festival. Cleo directs corporate charitable events and fundraising projects for not-for-profit organizations working within the Foundation's areas of interest. Since 1999, she has also been responsible for overseeing employee communications, including the Company's Intranet and corporate websites.

A Playboy employee since 1976, Cleo was named Foundation grants and programs manager in 1982. She was promoted to executive director of the Foundation in 1984, named director of public affairs in 1989 and appointed vice-president in 2000.

Cleo serves as a founder and president of the Chicago-based nonprofit arts organization, Intuit: The Center for Intuitive and Outsider Art, and serves on the board of the American Civil Liberties Union of Illinois, to which she was elected vice president in 1997. She also serves on a variety of state and municipal grant-review panels, including the Illinois Arts Council Advisory Review Panel, where she reviews grant applications and lends her expertise on policy and program development. Cleo is a member of the Advisory Council of the Women's Business Development Center, as well as the HotHouse: the Center for International Performance and Exhibition, and has served as a member of the board of directors of the National Coalition Against Censorship from 1997 to 2000. She also was a member of the AIDS Foundation of Chicago's board of directors from 1989 to 1999, and served as its president from 1990 to 1993. Cleo also lectures on philanthropy, race and related topics.

She has performed in three nonprofit productions of *The Vagina Monologues* and was featured in *watercloset(s)*, a video installation presented at the 2004 PAC/edge Performance Festival.

Listed since 1988 in *Who's Who Among African Americans* and, since 1990, in the *International Who's Who Among Professional and Business Women*, Cleo was saluted as one of Chicago's up-and-coming black business and professional women in 1985 by *Dollars and Sense* magazine. In 1984, she was inducted into the Black Woman Hall of Fame in recognition of her community service. In 1991, she was honored as a "Friend for Life" by the Howard Brown Medical Center. She received the "Phenomenal Woman Award" in 1997 at Chicago's Expo for Today's Black Woman, in recognition of her leadership and dedication to community issues. In 1999, Cleo was honored for her "leadership, compassion and generosity" by the AIDS Foundation of Chicago.

A native Chicagoan, she attended the University of Illinois at Chicago at age 31. She graduated with honors three years later in 1976. She counts as her greatest assets her two children, David and Susie, her strength and resiliency, and the ability to "cut through the crap."

You know it is quite fitting that Cleo's official bio ends with her ability to cut through the crap. Those of us who know her well know that Cleo is a person who abhors and absolutely will not tolerate the crap that flows in, around and through the practice of philanthropy. Indeed, as her friend and sometime student, it is one of the qualities for which I admire her most. Cleo has been blessed with an acute vision that sees through the crap and a voice that is both plain and outspoken. Over the 22 years that we have been colleagues and friends and stood as witnesses to many changes in our field and the world of nonprofits, I have often heard her strident voice for fairness and justice. I have often seen her comfortably speak the inconvenient truth. I have never known her vision to be clouded or her voice to be muted. In all things I have witnessed, she has been a woman of courage, a woman of conviction and a woman with the combination of keen intellect and incisive wit to cut through the crap like a hot knife through butter.

As I mentioned a moment ago, Cleo and I have been friends since we were both new to the field of philanthropy. Though I preceded her entry to the field by 3 or 4 years, she brought greater wisdom to the enterprise. So much so, that from our very first association I began learning from Cleo Wilson. Cleo knows this, but probably all of you do not, that on the topic for which she is being honored tonight, she was often a teacher to the person for whom the honor is named. Much of what I know and understand about the issues of diversity and inclusiveness in our field I learned through critical conversations with her. The analyses that I have recently brought to the discussion of diversity and inclusiveness in philanthropy have long been crystallized in Cleo's mind.

Many years ago she pointed the way for me, I simply took the path while emulating her vision and voice when the analysis seemed to fit the circumstance. For her instruction I am deeply grateful. Before I present her to you I want to take just a moment to thank Cleo for several other contributions that she made to my education. Cleo's knowledge is both deep and broad and, of course, it extends to many topics well beyond the realm of professional philanthropy. Over the years I have certainly benefited from her broad knowledge base. For example, through the simple act of encouraging me to see the African American woman director, Julie Dash's, movie "Daughters of the Dust", Cleo contributed to my expanded understanding and deep appreciation of the struggle for empowerment of African American women in both the historical and contemporary context. I wonder if she knew the degree to which that simple exposure would open my eyes to these issues. As another example, at Cleo's invitation, a couple of hours spent in the Field Museum one sunny Friday afternoon in June or an Autumn evening at a Soho art gallery in New York introduced me to the fascinating world and vision of intuitive artists.

I am again deeply grateful to her for growing my compassion for the struggle and rights of women and for igniting an appreciation of the everyday artist who is able to interpret life and express their genius without benefit of formal training. Finally, I am most grateful to Cleo for having introduced me to the abundant pleasure of red wine. Yes, Cleo has been my teacher in so many ways. I am thrilled to have the honor of providing her introduction tonight. I am humbled by both the occasion and by the person we honor tonight. My friends, I want you to know that the only thing that feels as good as having an award of this nature given in your name is to have

that award go to someone that you admire and respect as much as I admire and respect Cleo Wilson. Ladies and gentlemen, I give you my friend and teacher, Cleo F. Wilson.

### **SPEECH by Cleo F. Wilson**

Thank you Handy for that wonderful introduction. I am truly honored to have been nominated and selected for this award by my peers in philanthropy. That I stand here at all is due in large part to Rebecca Sive, my immediate predecessor at the Playboy Foundation and Christie Hefner, chairman and CEO of Playboy Enterprises. They, as well as many people in this audience—too many to single out—have been wonderfully supportive of me.

Even though there have been times where I have felt truly alone, there was always someone offering a hug or hand when I least expected, but most needed it.

Although I've been in this field for 22 years, I have a different story to tell. For one thing, I'm 61 years old. I came to this job as an older adult who had never been part of the nonprofit community. And, like many African Americans in this field, I didn't come from an upper middle class background.

Langston Hughes wrote a poem that has special meaning for me. It's entitled, *Mother to Son*. I'd like to read part of it to you:

"Life for me ain't been no crystal stair.

It's had tacks in it,  
and splinters  
and boards torn up,  
And places with  
no carpet on the floor.

But all the time,  
I've been climbin' on  
and reachin' landin's  
and turning corners

and sometimes goin' in the dark  
where there ain't no light.”

Thirty years ago, there didn't seem to be “no light.” It was not an easy path that led me here to this day. I am a foster child who grew up in Chicago and attended Chicago Public Schools. I am a product of the projects —Altgeld Gardens. At the age of 31, I decided that I would return to college and complete my education. I had been putting off the decision for 10 years, working as a keypunch operator—a machine that has since been replaced by personal computers—earning about \$150 a week, and raising my children.

Like many of you, I came from a working class family and knew the value of higher education. I knew in order to get a better job; to enjoy a better life, I would need to complete my education.

I remember sitting at the machine putting in data, when it became clear that, “If I don't do it now, I will be sitting at this machine another 30 years.” A few days after my birthday, I registered for school at the University of Illinois-Chicago. It was a heady experience. I was older than many of my instructors, certainly older than most of the student body. But life's experiences made it easier. I found that I was smarter than I thought and that gave me new confidence. I wasn't afraid to speak up in class. Unlike my first time in college, when I was 18, I wasn't looking for a social life, or husband, so I applied myself to my studies. I went to school every day, with the same discipline as going to work. And, I liked it.

In 1961, when I graduated from high school, I wasn't interested in book learning. I saw college as the ideal I had seen in the movies—professors in tweed jackets with leather patches at the elbows, the free flow of ideas, me sitting at the feet of the wise. However, this ideal did not include studying or homework.

One day while attending Chicago State University during my sophomore year, a friend told me there was a demonstration taking place near our school, and he asked me if I'd like to come along. I jumped at the chance. This decision was not based on social concern, but for the excitement of it – I didn't even know why they were picketing!

You see, this was 1962, the period of the Civil Right Movement. Africans Americans were demanding an end to segregation and like most of America, I watched it on the nightly news.

When I saw young people on TV picketing and sitting in, I never thought I could be one of them. I don't think that I was even aware of prejudice. I thought that was something that existed in the South. In Chicago, African Americans could eat at Woolworth's and didn't have to ride in the back of the bus. We lived, worshipped and shopped in our own community, whites in theirs. I never questioned this. It was the way things were.

However, once I got to the demonstration, I learned why it was taking place. The Board of Education was installing mobile classrooms at some schools in the Englewood community. These trailers were meant to ease the overcrowding at elementary schools on the east side of South Halsted Street. At that time, Halsted served as the boundary between the black and white communities. Although there were empty classrooms west of Halsted, rather than let the black students attend those schools, the mobile units were installed to contain the black student population. They were being placed on parking lots and playgrounds. Wooden horses were used to block off the streets so the children could play there. Through my involvement, I became politicized for the first time in my life. I came to understand racism.

But because this movement included people of all races and creeds, I learned that it was not white people per se, but the system itself that led to these types of decisions being made. For almost one semester, I went daily to the demonstration site. I worked with neighborhood mothers to get them involved.

My foster parents weren't aware of what I was doing. As time progressed, and we were making no headway in stopping the installation of the mobile units, our peaceful picketing grew to acts of civil disobedience.

Some of us would lay ourselves in the path, so that the trailers couldn't be installed. If the land was cleared to make way for the installation; we would dump garbage on the sites so that it had to be cleared. We organized people to clean out their basements and bring the junk to the site.

I even led the group of mothers I'd been working with to lay beneath the trailers that were perched on railroad ties. I shudder today as I think of how dangerous that was.

Nevertheless, the police were instructed to remove us for trespassing and this led to arrests. It was from the arrests that my parents learned of my activities. While my foster parents supported me in spirit, they felt that I was setting a bad example for my younger brothers by my flagrant disregard for the law.

Needless to say, I flunked out of school, having missed a whole semester of attending classes. That ended my first go around with college, but it led to a period of more activism around other issues.

I marched against the war in Vietnam and picketed for peace. But those "good times" came to an end when I married and had two children in two years. Now I had to work. At this time, my husband was an organizer for SDS – Students for a Democratic Society. We separated while my children were toddlers.

I had no skills. I never took a class that would assist me in the real work, I couldn't type—so I took a two-week course in keypunch operating. It was the endless grind of data entry that led me to the decision to return to school. The hard, cold reality of raising two children killed my idealism.

At age 33, and four days after graduating from UIC, I began working at Playboy.



I took an entry level position as an accounting clerk at \$145 a week—less than I was making as a key punch operator, but I stayed in the accounting area for six years. Although I progressed from clerk to supervisor, I did not feel my “career” began until 1982 when I transferred from accounting to the Playboy Foundation.

I had applied for every position that opened within the company, but the Foundation seemed a real fit. Part of my accounting responsibilities included handling the Foundation’s bank accounts. I knew who was getting the money and for what. I liked what I saw. I made a point of getting to know the executive director, Rebecca Sive. When a position opened, I was ready for the switch.

This was my first professional job. I got the right clothes and attended a Donors Forum luncheon, where I didn’t know a soul. Eleanor Petersen came up to me, asked who I was and then literally took me by the hand and led me into the room where she introduced me to many of you in this room.

From that first day at the Palmer House, I came to know many of you in this room—Bob Carter, of course, Handy, Sunny Fischer, Carol Crenshaw, Carolyn Swinney, Marta White, Aurie Pennick, Jean Rudd, Hedy Ratner, Mary Gugenheim, Iris Krieg, Susan Levy, Nick Goodban.

I was a founding member of CBIP—Chicago Blacks in Philanthropy, a proud and militant group of Foundation professionals. I am a continuing member of the Association of Black Foundation Executives

This summer marks the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. It’s also the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Brown v. Board of Education*. It took an act of Congress to give African Americans the right to “equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, and accommodations of any place of public accommodation.” It took a Supreme Court decision to force the integration of public schools.

Next year will mark the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Voting Rights Act. It's a sad commentary that we are still fighting disenfranchisement, not just in Florida but also in states across the country. But we've come a mighty long way. No longer do we have to fear the lynchings, water canons, vicious dogs, and the bombings—just to get basic rights. And, I believe the tent is big enough to accommodate all of us, but African Americans have earned the right to stand at the front of the line.

But I'm fearful. Who's got my back? Do I have to be in the room in order for race to be considered?

The overall retrenchment against the civil rights gains made during the 1960s and after, including the rollback of affirmative action, the reconfiguration of welfare, threats to a woman's right to choose, escalating discrimination against gays and lesbians, and the backlash against the Americans with Disabilities Act all represent challenges to gains made by diverse communities over the past 40 years.

The outlook is not good. The downturn in the economy, combined with the adverse economic effects of the so-called "War on Terror," has created a more difficult climate in which to advocate for diversity and inclusiveness in philanthropy. Greater diversity will have to come about either through replacement or expansion of current philanthropic staffs and boards. On the staff level, both outcomes are less likely in uncertain economic times, when institutions are not adding new staff and existing staff is unlikely to change jobs.

It is ironic but perhaps not surprising that foundations are more reluctant than ever to support a broad social change agenda at precisely the time when so many issues important to diverse communities are facing common threats.

The browning of the U.S. population, in this more conservative political climate, has resulted in the restriction rather than the expansion of civil rights.

Foundations have experienced many profound changes in recent decades. The field has been feminized, moving from being male dominated to female dominated in numerical terms. In 1996—the first year that the Council on Foundation began keeping racial data—Foundation and giving program managerial staff was 64.2% female, 81.3% white. In 2002, it was 67% female, 78.7 white.

There also has been a significant increase in persons of color working in the field. In 1996, 18 percent of foundation managerial staff were people of color, of which 10.3 were African Americans and 4.1 Hispanic.

In 2002, it was 21.3 percent people of color, of which 10.3 are African American and 5.1, are Hispanic. Asian/Pacific Islanders increased from 3.7 in 1996 to 4.9 in 2002. From 1996 to 2002, the numbers rose for all other groups but African Americans.

According to *The Meaning and Impact of Staff and Board Diversity in the Philanthropic Field: Findings from a National Study*, conducted by the Joint Affinity Group (JAG) in 2002, barriers persist in the grantmaking field based on disability, ethnicity and race, as well as gender and sexual orientation. Unfortunately there is little or no national data on people with disabilities.

The JAG research makes clear that numbers are not enough; institutional culture and practices must change to have a lasting impact.

- No sisters, we're not paranoid—Women of color continue to face the most significant barriers in the field. We earn less and give smaller grants than our white colleagues. We are less likely to move into senior staff and CEO positions, or to be involved in governance and hiring.

- Men of color have made proportionately significant gains. But in spite of their higher salaries and greater grantmaking responsibilities, they hold a small percentage of CEO positions. They also are highly concentrated in large, independent and community foundations.
- White women are the most highly represented group in the field. They are most successful in the smaller foundations. However, this means that women CEOs control fewer grantmaking assets than their male counterparts. In addition, women in the sample earned less and gave less in grants than men.
- Gays and lesbians tend to earn less than heterosexuals and experience less mobility into top positions. This is particularly true for lesbians. Gays and lesbians appear to be concentrated in certain fields, such as the arts and reported a greater likelihood of their grant decisions being overruled by the CEO or board.

In short, Foundation culture is alienating for those who are not from white, upper-class backgrounds.

It doesn't look very different locally.

As it has every four years since 1990, the Donors Forum undertook a survey in early 2002 on inclusiveness to gauge progress locally toward building more diverse organizations. While grantmakers made slow progress throughout the 90's, the 2002 survey reveals that barriers to inclusiveness remain. Among the survey's key findings:

- With support staff data eliminated, ethnic/racial minority staff representation declines. African American representation dropped from 19 percent to 11 percent; Asian Americans, from 4 percent to 3%; and Latino, from 7 percent to 5%.

When considering disability and sexual orientation, the picture becomes bleaker.

- Only 4 percent of program staff and 2.5 percent of CEOs identify as gay or lesbian and less than 1 percent of program staff and no CEOs are disabled.
- African American representation on boards has dropped from a high of 14 percent in 1998 to 9 percent in 2002, while Latino representation stalled at 4 percent;
- Whites comprise 88 percent of CEOs and 66 percent of senior vice presidents, which is higher than the national average of 78%;
- Women make up only 40 percent of governing boards, while they represent 74 percent of total staff.

The lesson that I learned early on, is despite good intentions, people have to be pushed to change.

While increasing the numbers of different kinds of people is an all-important first step to inclusiveness, the concept of inclusiveness does not stop at changing the numbers.

As Malcolm X said in the *Message to the Grassroots*, “Just because we’re sitting at the table don’t mean we’re eating.”

Clearly white women have benefited the most from affirmative action and diversity programs. In Illinois, even though the number of white women CEOs has declined, by almost 2 percent since 1998, they still account for more than half of CEOs. So, I’m looking to you for leadership on these issues. Inclusiveness is difficult. It involves more than numbers, more than putting people of diverse races, sexual orientations and backgrounds together in the same room. The underlying philosophy of inclusiveness is that the organization will perform better if the talents of different kinds of people are utilized.

As Mary Francis Winters, wrote in 1996, in *Include Me! Making the Case for Inclusiveness for Private and Family Foundations*, “Inclusiveness, is much more than changing the mix. It is the recognition that different cultures, people from different socioeconomic levels and ethnic

backgrounds are actually an asset to the organization because they bring their life experiences and unique perspectives.

There is a tendency among many organizations to select individuals of color who are most like themselves from a class perspective thus diminishing the benefits that can be derived from considering the heterogeneity within various racial and ethnic groups.” Look at the Bush cabinet. It’s diverse, but it’s certainly monolithic.

No culture is monolithic, and, therefore, the challenge for foundations truly interested in being more inclusive is to recognize that simply adding two African Americans to the board, for example, will not necessarily provide “the voice of the black community.” A Japanese staff member will not necessarily know much about Vietnamese immigrants even though both are “Asian.”

We also need to address issues of retention and advancement as well as initial recruitment.

We need to monitor and assess utilization of people of color; to make sure we are not ghettoizing people in designated “minority positions.”

We need to make sure that once people of color are in the room, their roles are real and not diminished.

We have to examine habits of leadership and participation, and patterns of authority. Respecting and valuing diverse staff contributes to successful efforts.

According to the 2002 Donors Forum study, when grantmakers were questioned about their formal policies toward inclusiveness, the survey found that:

- Just 19% of respondents had implemented inclusive grantmaking policies;
- Fewer than 15% have diversity training program;

- Only 23 percent have formal policies to increase diversity, and just 16 percent have affirmative action policies.

Foundation culture must change for diversity to be successful. Being inclusive means we will work to understand different cultures and subcultures by learning more about them and the unique contributions they can make and how the organizational culture must change in order to allow each person to be comfortable in the environment. With inclusiveness you will not only feel better, but you will actually perform more effectively.

The next Donors Forum survey will not come until 2006. I encourage CAAIP to initiate the process and follow the example of the JAG study. Collaborate with the other affinity groups to collect and analyze the data. And then, get it out there.

For better or worse, the media is scrutinizing foundations. Use the study to apply pressure to foundations. However, unless staff and board diversity and inclusiveness can be positioned as a relevant issue with regard to philanthropy, such potential may go unfulfilled.

To the Donors Forum I ask the following:

- Establish a task force or committee to lead the initiative. The work of diversity is participatory and often takes place through teams, including representatives from all levels in an organization. Such mechanisms handle problem solving and provide a vehicle for dealing with internal culture and policies.
- Employment benefits are a signal of an institution's commitment to become an inclusive, multicultural workplace. Acknowledgement of multicultural holidays, domestic partner benefits and policies, and workplace accommodations for people with disabilities indicate institutional awareness and attract diverse staff.

Written materials are essential.

- Include a commitment to diversity in key statements. Develop written materials that communicate diversity objectives. Add diversity and inclusiveness statements to your website.
- Committed organizations articulate the importance of diversity in the institution's mission, vision, values, and funding strategy.

Educate the field about the need for diversity.

- Continue to inform boards and trustees about the value of diversity.
- If we can't get diversity-training programs in the foundations, undertake a training program for members at the Donors Forum, pass on concrete skills that managers can then use to train other staff.

Diversity is a conscious, ongoing process.

To my colleagues in CAAIP, look to the former members of CBIP for expertise. There is a wealth of experience that can and should be tapped. Unfortunately, many of the issues you face as a group, we faced 20 years ago.

What do you want CAAIP to be? Advocates? I encourage you to read the Sunday, June 13 Business section of Chicago Tribune. There is an article on the Chicago Network as it celebrates 25 years. There are lessons we can learn.

Increase the visibility of CAAIP in the funding community.

Educate—use the Donors Forum as a platform

Be vocal about our concerns



I know many of you, like me, are tired of having to fight the good guys. I wish we didn't have to. But the first step we can take is to stop being quiet about it.

You know how we are. We get together and, man, do we have a lot to say about the prejudice and racism that we encounter. Don't hold back.

Handy said it best in his closing remarks last year. I'd like to reiterate them.

- *Make a commitment to be an advocate for your communities. Facilitate access whenever and wherever you can. Be bold in this effort. Be strategic. Be persistent.*
- *Be willing to be the interpreter within our institutions for the community programs that may not present an articulate spokesperson.*
- *At the same time, be proactive in sharing your interest in and experience on a variety of issues rather than only when the issues relate to our community and race.*
- *Commit to being a part of community as a participant observer.*
- *Assume there is good will within our institutions rather than prejudice. In equal parts, we are called upon to be bold and patient, to have faith, and to be forgiving.*
- *Never forget your responsibility to reach back. Remember who and what helped you become an effective grantmaker of color and try to emulate those who pointed the way for you. Be a guide, a coach, a mentor. Make the path easier for those who follow.*

Most of all, don't give up. We have come a mighty long way. We can change the political climate. Let's get Bush and the neo-cons out of office. They foster divisiveness and racism.

In the end, it's not about any of us. It's not our money. We're only the stewards. But perhaps by 2006, we will see changes and grantmaking institutions that better reflect and respond to the communities they serve.

As Heather Steans, who was chair of DF board of directors and Bud Lifton, who chaired the inclusiveness committee wrote in 2002, " If we cannot effectively recruit, retain and promote a diverse and inclusive staff, what does that say about distributing grants equitably?"

Thank you. This is a great honor.

## 2004 PLANNING COMMITTEE

### Handy L. Lindsey, Jr. Award and Lecture on Inclusiveness in Philanthropy

Tina Battle  
Chicago Foundation for Women

Iris Krieg  
Iris Krieg & Associates

Evette Cardona  
Polk Bros. Foundation

Valerie Lies  
Donors Forum of Chicago

Warren Chapman  
Bank One Corporation Foundation

Aurie Pennick  
The Field Foundation of IL

Shelley Davis  
The Joyce Foundation

David Pesqueira  
Robert R. McCormick Tribune Foundation

Louis Delgado  
Loyola University Chicago

Gwendolyn M. Rice  
Windows of Opportunity

Sunny Fischer  
The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation

Anne Roosevelt  
The Boeing Company

Linda Harlan  
Chicago Foundation for Women

Tim Russell  
Sara Lee Foundation

Deborah Harrington  
Woods Fund of Chicago

Howard Stanback  
Leadership Council of Metropolitan Open  
Communities

Kathy Im  
John D. & Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation

Jeanne Kracher  
Crossroads Fund



**CLEO F. WILSON**

Executive Director, Playboy Foundation  
Vice President, Playboy Enterprises

Cleo F. Wilson is the first recipient of the Handy L. Lindsey, Jr. Award and Lecture on Inclusiveness in Philanthropy, named in honor of one of Chicago's philanthropic leaders for racial and ethnic diversity and inclusiveness in the field. A 22 year veteran, Cleo has been one of the more outspoken and imaginative grantmakers in Chicago philanthropy. She has demonstrated inclusiveness as a grantmaker and was one of the first to bring attention and action to the issues of HIV/AIDS, gay and lesbian rights and violence against women.

As executive director of the Playboy Foundation, Cleo has guided its focus to include human and civil rights. She developed a grants program designed to impact organizing efforts few others would fund, but where she knew even small investments would make a difference. A member of many community boards, she is the founder and president of the Chicago-based nonprofit arts organization, Intuit: The Center for Intuitive and Outsider Art.