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November 17, 2013

From: Michael Jacoby Brown**Introduction**

This month's E-News features the views of **Malia Lazu**, an organizer at [Future Boston](#). [Future Boston](#) is founded by retail clothing internet entrepreneur Greg Selkoe of [Karmaloop](#). [Future Boston](#) includes a mix of business entrepreneurship training, community building and breaking down "silos" of race and geography, and also works for policy change at the City level - particularly for issues that matter to young adults.

David Hernandez, a community organizer (one of the few in a labor union) with the [California Teachers Association](#), asks some questions about why younger teachers are involved in issues - but outside the union. *[Any answers or suggestions for David?](#)*

I add a story from that shows an advantage of hiring a community organizer with deep roots in an urban neighborhood, and the importance of having a long-term, strong organization in a neighborhood. And a poem.

I hope you will comment on these contributions and add yours.

Our goal is to advance the craft of organizing and to help us become **"reflective practitioners."** To do that we need learn what is at the "edge" of **your** organizing.



Malia Lazu, the Executive Director of [Future Boston](#), Malia has two decades of experience establishing grass roots involvement in political advocacy. At age 19, she founded [Mass Vote](#) and went on to manage philanthropic-branding campaigns for numerous tastemakers including Grammy Award-winner & famed Civil-Rights Activist, Harry Belafonte and American novelist Walter Mosley.

In the past two years, Malia was responsible for launching Future Boston's web site, and conceptualizing and developing the two signature programs: ASSEMBLE, named "Best of the New" by Boston Globe, a weekly event series to reduce silos, and showcase the work of local artists/designers, and ACCELERATE, a 6-month accelerator program designed to support the creative economy. Building ACCELERATE required Malia to first establish an advisory board made from Boston's most innovative entrepreneurs, and then to develop a condensed curriculum based on a traditional MBA syllabus that would cater specifically to creative entrepreneurs.

Malia Lazu has also built program in DC for [The Institute for Policy Studies](#), [SEIU](#) and Scott + Yandura. She now lives in Cambridge, MA.

Malia Lazu, Director, **Future Boston Alliance**:

What is an organizer? And what are we really building?

I think organizing needs to modernize, because we are on the dole. I consider myself a leftist. Organizing is the idea is to help communities build. It is something like church to me.

When I was in DC where I saw organizations spending millions of dollars for a march. Then I saw volunteers in other cities who were saving the lives of children, but with no way to get in front of big donors. Or if they did get in front of big donors, they didn't have the accoutrements, --like an annual report with glossy pictures. Some of the people I saw doing great work did not even have electricity in their house, so how can you expect them to have time to write you a proposal?...[Read on...](#)

David Hernandez works for the **California Teachers Association** in the Community Outreach Department.

David Hernandez: wants to know about who is successfully organizing younger union members, especially teachers, to get involved with the union. Young teachers will often, he said, get involved with other social justice issues, but not thru the union. (Issues like housing, employment, etc.) There are also various groups of teachers in various disciplines who associate among themselves for professional improvement, special needs, math teachers, etc. There is a conference, not organized by the union, of

"teachers for social justice." The union will go, but is not behind it. Also your thoughts and tips: how to get started, how to sustain a group, how to grow from one issue to the next, how to deal with apathy.

Long Term Organization and Neighborhood-based Community Organizer Makes The Difference -- Michael Jacoby Brown

A recent meeting of organizers and neighborhood leaders with three managers from the regional transit authority made me reflect how a strong long standing neighborhood organization and local organizers contribute to a campaign's success. In this case, we met to press the transit managers for better signs at local train stations -- so neighborhood residents would know about the service and the recently lowered fares.

Sitting in the comfortable conference room of the community organization, one of the organizers suggested that everyone go outside to see the train station firsthand. He knew the experience of seeing the lack of signage would influence the sign managers more than being just being told about the problem... [Read on...](#)

Michael Jacoby Brown

How to Use a Tea Bag *(with help from [Tom Wylie](#))*

It has taken me all these years to use a tea bag only once
 Tea bags are like money, I hate to see them go
 I am slowly giving up my worries about money.
 My college room-mate used to make fun of me
 For re-using old tea bags
 "You ought to hang it with the pull chain from the light in the kitchen."
 Am I so unusual?
 To worry about not having enough?
 I once met someone who told me she never worried about money.
 I was amazed, I could hardly believe her.
 How could someone not worry about not having enough?
 Not that I was that poor growing up.
 We had enough.
 What does the worry do?
 Never got me more tea bags!

[We want to hear from you, your reactions, ideas, what is at the edge YOUR "envelope." Just go to... http://michaeljacobybrown.com/contact/](http://michaeljacobybrown.com/contact/)

Who else you will hear from.....

We are just starting, but so far you can expect to hear what the following people are thinking:

[George Luse](#) of the Mass Teachers Assn,

[Scott Reed](#) with the PICO Network, ,

[Cathy Howell](#), in Oregon and El Salvador, formerly with the AFL-CIO,

[Ceasar McDowell](#) of the Interaction Institute for Social Justice,
[Diana Bell](#) of Community and Labor United,
[David Hernandez](#) of the California Education Assn,
[Linda Honold](#), of Wisconsin Voices
[Attica Scott](#), now an elected official in Louisville, KY, formerly with Jobs with Justice,
[Quinn Rallings](#) in Alabama with the PICO Network,
[Bob Van Meter](#) with the Local Initiative Support Corporation in Boston,
[Walter Davis](#), in Tennessee, of the National Organizers Alliance,
[Deb Askenase](#), of Community Organizing 2.0,
[Cherie Andes](#), of the Industrial Areas Foundation,
[Avi Green](#), with MassVote,
[Deb Fastino](#), of the Coalition for Social Justice in New Bedford, MA,
[Rebecca Gutman](#), with SEIU-1199,
[Tim Dean](#), of SEIU-1199,
[Claudia Horwitz](#), of Stone Circles in North Carolina,
[Mary Ochs](#), long time organizer in Los Angeles
 and others, hopefully, including YOU

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