# MODULE 5:
# MONEY,
# VALUES AND
# OPPORTUNITY

# "THE OPPOSITE OF POVERTY IS NOT WEALTH. IN TOO MANY PLACES, THE OPPOSITE OF POVERTY IS JUSTICE."
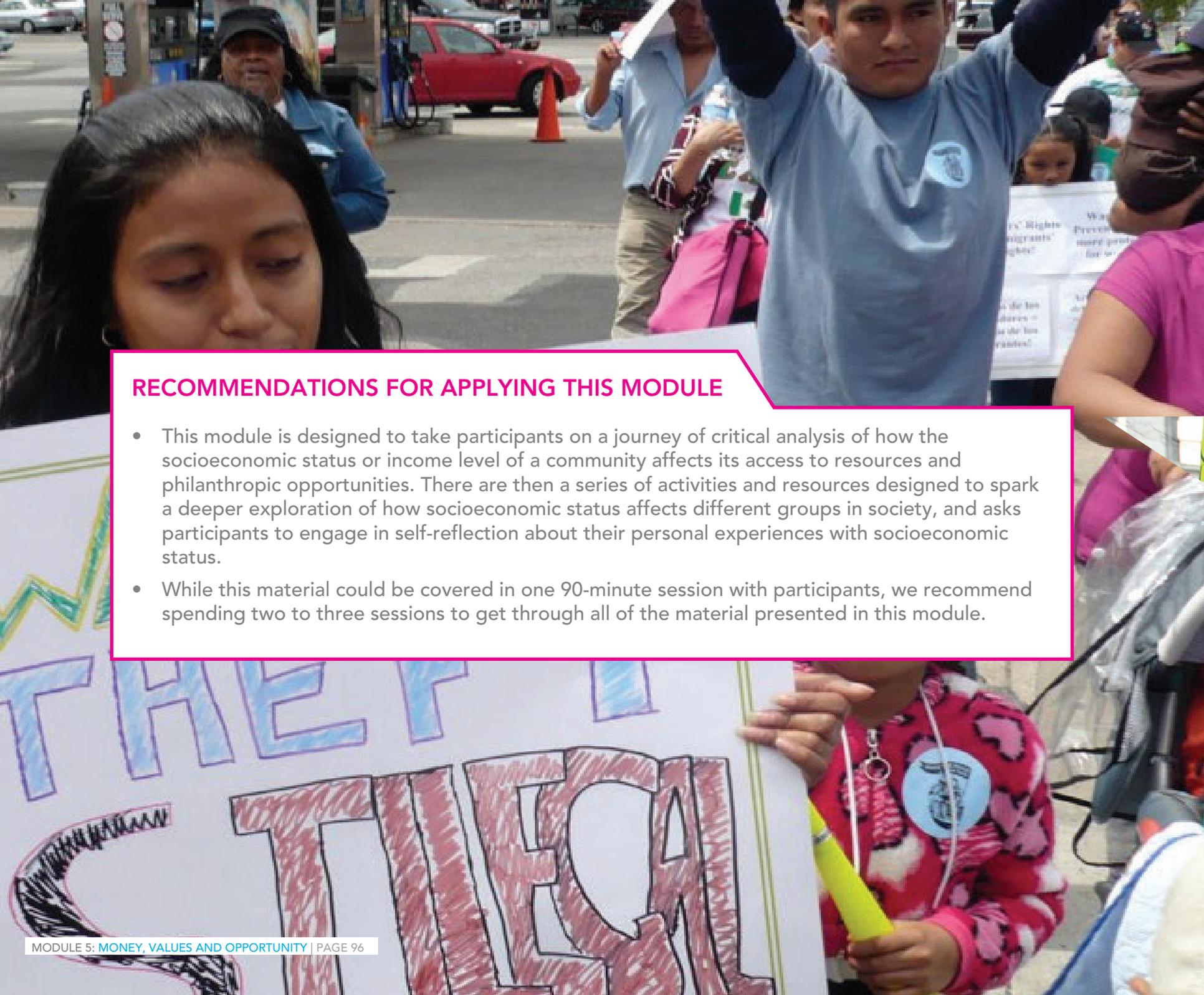
— Bryan Stevenson

## CONTEXT

Oppression is a systemic dynamic that gives advantages, access and opportunity to select social groups based on their identity and disenfranchises others of the same advantages and opportunities solely based on their membership in a certain social group. The different life experiences of people can be highlighted along several dividing lines (race, gender, ability status, religion, etc.). Socioeconomic status, or class, is a social identity we'll explore in this module to unpack how the socioeconomic status of the family one is born into directly affects their life chances. We'll go further and explore how philanthropy intersects with these divisions among class, both in terms of individual experiences as well as the influence these divisions have on entire communities.

## OBJECTIVES

- Participants will understand how foundations and nonprofit partners work together and how grantmaking is implemented.

- Participants will explore how socioeconomic status affects one's life chances, and how our society's system of stratification plays out in the United States.

- Participants will understand the connection between philanthropy and social injustice in our society.

- Participants will reflect on how priorities and values are shaped by socioeconomic issues and privilege.
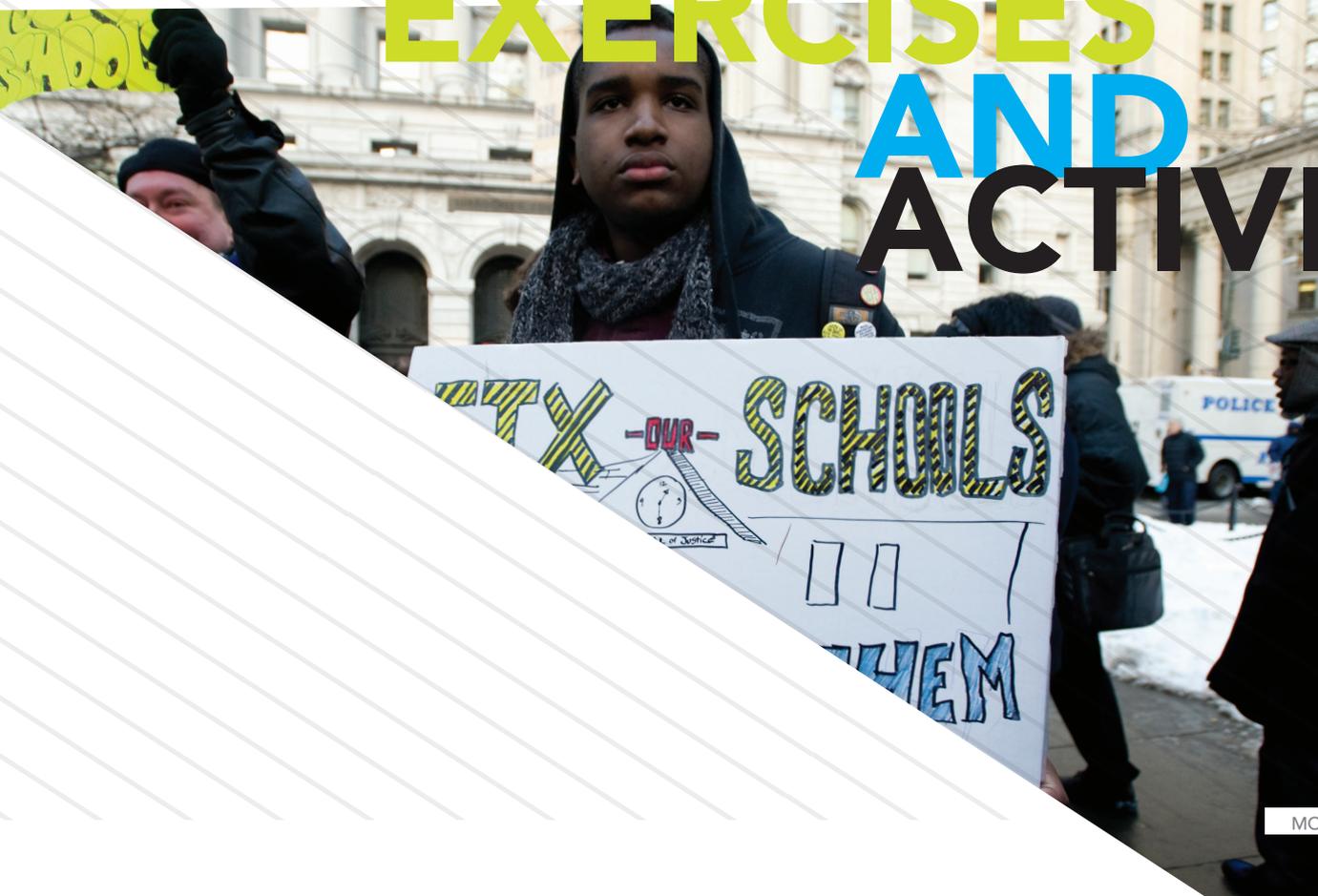
## RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

- Read excerpts from "Grantmaking with a Racial Equity Lens" GrantCraft. For a more in-depth list of resources related to racial equity and philanthropy, see page 19. http://bit.ly/GrantCraft_Equity

- Watch this excerpt from the PBS Documentary "A Class Divided": "A Daring Lesson" and "Day 2": http://bit.ly/Video_Class-Divide

- Read "Why Is It So Hard to Talk To White People About Race" http://bit.ly/WhitePpl_Race

- Read "Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria" by Beverly Tatum (pages 52-74; "Identity Development in Adolescents")

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR APPLYING THIS MODULE

- This module is designed to take participants on a journey of critical analysis of how the socioeconomic status or income level of a community affects its access to resources and philanthropic opportunities. There are then a series of activities and resources designed to spark a deeper exploration of how socioeconomic status affects different groups in society, and asks participants to engage in self-reflection about their personal experiences with socioeconomic status.

- While this material could be covered in one 90-minute session with participants, we recommend spending two to three sessions to get through all of the material presented in this module.

# EXERCISES AND ACTIVITIES

# NUTS AND BOLTS

## HOW FOUNDATIONS CONNECT TO PARTNERS

**Remind participants of the philanthropy topics covered to date (key terms, definition and history of philanthropy and social justice philanthropy). Signal that this exercise will cover "how" grantmaking gets implemented. If participants reviewed the case study in module four, begin by referencing "A's" work at the Fictional Foundation and ask participants if they remember how "A" planned to establish partnerships with organizations serving high school students. If not, begin by asking participants how they know or imagine this process to work.**

- Reinforce that the way foundations fund organizations or projects can vary according to multiple dimensions. Invite participants to talk about anything that surprised or confused them:

  - The degree to which the foundation defines what it's looking for: A foundation can choose to be proactive in defining the solution it seeks to fund. It could also take a "hands-off" approach by issuing a problem or challenge and inviting solutions from the field.

  - The pool of grantees it considers: A foundation can choose to offer opportunities to partners it identifies by soliciting grant proposals, or it can provide open opportunities to all interested parties by accepting proposals from the public ("unsolicited" proposals).

  - Different tools can be used to support various approaches: issuing a request for proposals, accepting proposals on a rolling basis, hosting competitions, etc.

**IF PARTICIPANTS ARE INTERESTED IN GAINING MORE EXPOSURE TO HOW FOUNDATIONS CONNECT WITH GRANTEES AND WHAT THE SOCIAL JUSTICE IMPLICATIONS ARE FOR THESE PROCESSES, YOU CAN REFER THEM TO ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

http://bit.ly/PND_Call
http://bit.ly/GrantCraft_RFP

# PAIR SHARE

## SHARING VALUES AND PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

**Visualization:** First, ask the group to close their eyes and think about the possibilities for their lives. Ask: What is your "American Dream"? What does happiness look like for you? Where do you live? What work are you doing? Do you have children? What kind of neighborhood do you live in?
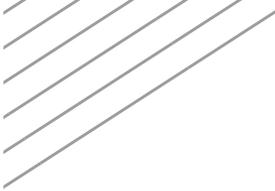
Then, have group members engage in a 10-minute discussion in pairs using the following guiding questions:

1. What is one of your core values? How does it guide you when making decisions?

2. How do you identify happiness? Are you currently able to pursue that happiness? Why or why not?

3. How do you identify economic success? Does your family have what you would consider economic success? How do you expect to achieve it as an adult?

4. Is the American Dream a real thing — that is, is it achievable? Why or why not?

5. What barriers make it harder for some groups to achieve economic success?

6. What does it mean to be wealthy? Middle class? Lower-income? Poor?

**This activity gives participants a chance to reflect on their values and what each person wants out of life. Most people have a vision of what they want in their lives. Sometimes the vision matches their reality, sometimes not.**

**Debrief Questions:**

• How does privilege come into play here?

• What role does philanthropy play in a system where not everyone has equal access to achieving their dreams?

## COMMUNITY DISCUSSION ON THE WORD GAP

To better understand how the families and communities we are born into may affect our life chances, both positively and negatively, have the group read The Atlantic article "Poor Kids and The Word Gap." http://bit.ly/Article_WordGap
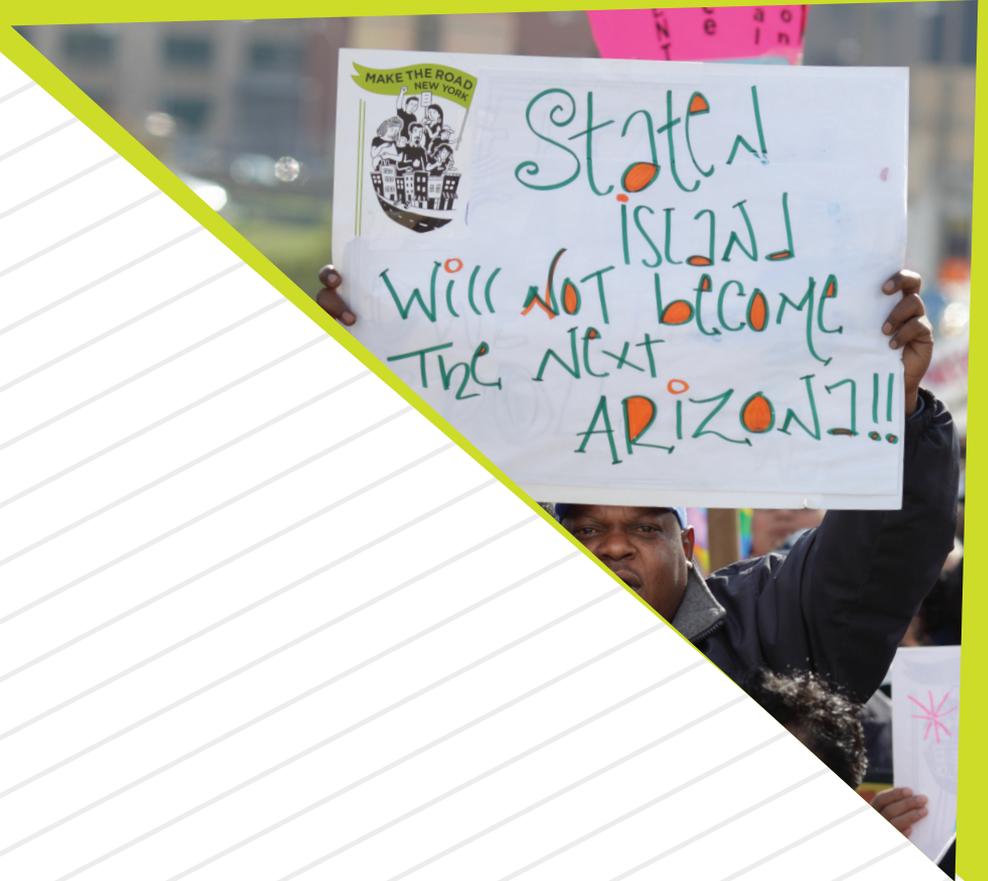
Use the following guiding questions to discuss the article:

- What are the major issues this article highlights? What in this article was new information for you? What have you learned about before?

- Share the quote by Horace Mann, "Education… is a great equalizer of the conditions of men, the balance wheel of the social machinery."

    - What does this quote mean to you?

    - Is it accurate to say that education is the great equalizer? Why or why not?

    - Does everyone have access to equal education? Is quality of education the same for all children?

- Share this quote from the article: "*Much of this disadvantage has been attributed to what researchers call the "word gap." Higher-income parents spend nearly a half hour more per day engaged in direct, face-to-face, "Goodnight Moon" time with their children than low-income parents do, and by the time these children are 5 years old, the poor ones will have heard 30 million fewer words than their wealthy peers. Nearly all of my more affluent students read in their leisure time, but approximately two out of every 10 of my poor students tell me, "I don't read" when I offer to help them pick out an independent reading book.*"

    - Ask: What do you think about this?

    - What are the implications of this tremendous gap between children coming from *different income levels?*

- Share this quote from the article: "*When a child is deprived of food, there is public outrage. And this is because child hunger is correctly identified as a moral and economic issue that moves people to action. We believe that the poverty of vocabulary should be discussed with the same passion as child hunger.*"

    - Ask: What do you think about this?

    - What are the implications of this tremendous gap between children coming from *different income levels?*

- Remind the group what our working definition of social justice philanthropy is (from Resource Generation): *Social justice philanthropy focuses on the root causes of social, economic and environmental injustices. It strives to include the people who are impacted by those injustices as decision-makers. It also aims to make the field of philanthropy more accessible and diverse. In social justice philanthropy, foundations are accountable, transparent and responsive in their grantmaking. Donors and foundations act as allies to social justice movements by contributing not only monetary resources but their time, knowledge, skills and access. Social justice philanthropy is also sometimes called social change philanthropy, social movement philanthropy, and community-based philanthropy.*

    - How can social justice philanthropy be applied to this social issue?

    - To what extent can philanthropy address this kind of social issue? Can philanthropy play a role in closing the "word gap?" Why or why not?

# THE GAP

# WIDENS

To see how the "word gap," which starts in the first years of life, plays out on a larger scale throughout the course of one's life, have participants read this cartoon about Paula and Richard: http://bit.ly/Wireless_Pencilsword

## FACILITATOR'S NOTE

**If your group is open to performance, you can have the group act out the scenes from this cartoon to highlight the different dynamics between Paula's and Richard's circumstances. Then use the same questions below to debrief as a whole group.**

- How does the "word gap" and the story depicted in this cartoon connect to the quote by Bryan Stevenson, "The opposite of poverty is not wealth. In too many places, the opposite of poverty is justice."

- What would justice look like when it comes to the gaps created in access to opportunities by income level?

- What do you believe the opposite of poverty would be in our society?

- How does poverty connect to the concept of privilege we've been exploring?

- What is the role of philanthropy in addressing the disparity between people like Richard and Paula? Is there a place for philanthropy in addressing the root causes of these disparities? Why or why not?

- What is your personal experience with the issues depicted in this cartoon? Can you relate more to Paula or Richard?

- How does your personal experience (and privilege, or lack thereof) inform your interest in philanthropy? How does it shape the way you approach philanthropy?

## CASE STUDY: IMAGINE THIS…

**Introduce the following scenario and facilitate a discussion with questions provided below:**

*Marie is retiring after a long and successful career as a medical doctor. In her retirement, she's decided to start a launch a small private foundation to support breast cancer awareness. This issue is personal for Marie. She was diagnosed with breast cancer herself eight years prior. With an early diagnosis and top notch care, she survived and remains cancer free today. Recognizing that many women don't have the same resources and access to the early screenings that saved Marie's life, she decides to focus her foundation's efforts on a large Latino community proximate to her home.*

*After launching the foundation, Marie realizes that her first step will be to identify nonprofits that can reach women in the neighboring community to provide screening services. To identify those organizations Marie reaches out to former colleagues and high-level leaders in major cancer research centers.*

*Eduardo works at a community health outreach center in the community. He's a social worker and talks to women every day who either don't know about getting a mammogram or can't afford to get a mammogram. He spends all of his time in the community working directly with women of all ages. He grew up in this community and is deeply committed to getting resources into the neighborhood to do early breast cancer screenings.*

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

**Imagine a scenario that would bring Marie and Eduardo together. What would have to happen for these individuals to connect?**

- Remind participants of the quoted passage from the New Yorker article in Module 3, Activity 5 and emphasize again that practicing social justice philanthropy is difficult.

- Ask participants to revisit exercise 1 from this module and imagine some tactics that Marie could use to bring Eduardo into her network.