The Irish philosopher Edmund Burke is quoted as having said: “Justice is itself the great standing policy of civil society; and any eminent departure from it, under any circumstances, lies under the suspicion of being no policy at all.”

Those selected for inclusion in this year’s The NonProfit Times Power & Influence Top 50 exemplify those words. During the past 12 months there has been an increased emphasis on effective implementation of a more civil society. That has taken the form of demanded inclusion, beginning to effect change in the way in which the general public views the sector and evolving those expectations, or the simple use of language.

This unveiling of the industry’s innovators illustrates the power of people pushing society for equal access and opportunity. While that concept has always been the sector’s hallmark, recently it seems that the insistence for inclusion has needed ratcheting up and sector leaders have responded.

The call has been answered with ideas, technology, action and persuasion. In some cases they have put themselves physically on the line for equity and access. Strategy and tactics have been important, but so has the way sector leaders, and the general public, view what nonprofit organizations mean to the greater society.

There is quite a bit of turnover in this 17th annual catalog of the sector’s big brains. There are 17 new honorees on the 2014 honor roll and three executives who are returning to the club after taking some time off, apparently to come up with new ideas.

Burke also said: “Under the pressure of the cares and sorrows of our mortal condition, men have at all times, and in all countries, called in some physical aid to their moral consolations -- wine, beer, opium, brandy, or tobacco.” And so the honorees and their guests will be feted in Washington, D.C., next month during the annual NPT Power & Influence Top 50 Gala. That night one of the honorees will receive the second annual Innovator of the Year award.

The evening always involves conversation between people who would not normally have the opportunity to interact. As Burke said: “There is a boundary to men’s passions when they act from feelings; but none when they are under the influence of imagination.” The men and women recognized on the following pages exemplify those words. Here they are – The 2014 NPT Power & Influence Top 50 honorees. NPT
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Diana Aviv
President & CEO
Independent Sector
Washington, D.C.

Aviv believes you have to decide on long-term goals and then work backward from there, which is not easy when the sector moves from one political crisis to the next and seems to live day-by-day. Her ability to successfully manage both long and short term while being hip-deep in the sector’s politics is what makes her stand out.

Charles Best
Founder & CEO
DonorsChoose.org
New York, N.Y.

What started by providing a few school supplies via crowdsourcing is now getting A.P. STEM education into roughly 900 low- and middle-income schools without a fight from teachers or school districts. Next, it’s computer coding. Best is a social entrepreneur who with the help of big businesses and small donors is changing the way schools improve.

Jeffrey L. Bradach
Managing Partner & Co-founder
BridgeSpan Group
Boston, Mass.

His ideas on scaling what works for impact evolves his 1998 work Franchise Organizations in the for-profit space and he is getting momentum with what he calls the “What Works Movement.” Scaling what works, plural form, is fine. Some argue it takes the experimentation out of getting there, which is core to the sector.

Phil Buchanan
President
Center for Effective Philanthropy
Cambridge, Mass.

Buchanan is the sector’s science fair project. You get to see just how far a carotid artery can expand in the neck without exploding when he talks about for-profits masquerading as nonprofits. Believing firms and markets hold all the answers, he argues, puts at risk the ability to deal with the most pressing societal problems and to aid the most vulnerable.

Dan Busby
President
Evangelical Council for Financial Accountability
Winchester, Va.

Busby remains the financial conscience and beat cop of the sector’s evangelicals. He is all about transparency when it comes to finances and adhering to secular guidelines, even if the groups are not required to do so by state and federal law. His members will be ready for the end-times of tax exemption and the remote chance of audit by the IRS.

Donna Butts
Executive Director
Generations United
Washington, D.C.

Social Security isn’t just for older Americans and Butts was among the first to weave a link between the generations and then do something about it. She tells people to wake up and smell the demographics of a changing, interdependent society. It’s about economics and passing along wisdom in a society becoming more and more gated.

Sonya Campion
Trustee & Co-Founder
Campion Foundation
Seattle, Wash.

Said one Pacific Northwest social entrepreneur: “I’d walk through the fire with her.” Three decades of powerhouse fundraising experience and a pal in the White House position her for great influence. Imagine, someone not in the Gates universe with clout in Seattle. Her grants trigger significant change in the social and environmental arenas.

Diana Campoamor
President
Hispanics in Philanthropy
Oakland, Calif.

Campoamor has launched a crowdsourcing initiative that combines the reach of a dozen organizations to generate income for investment in Latino communities across the country. Capacity building is what she’s about, connecting funders with communities that are changing America’s demographics – its workforce and its youth.

Emmett Carson
President & CEO,
Silicon Valley Community Foundation
Mountain View, Calif.

His name comes up for every major job that opens but he’s not leaving Silicon Valley. He is championing “intentional efforts” in math and science and found disparity even in Silicon Valley, an area known for its math and science whizzes. With $4.7 billion under management, he rattles cages in as many areas as he wishes.

Michael Chatman
Senior Vice President of Philanthropy
Community Foundation of the Ozarks
Springfield, Mo.

Whether it’s through CFO’s 5 affiliate regional foundations, his own foundation, celebrity connections, or his more than 40,000 Twitter followers, Chatman is just about everywhere. He is a social media influencer in philanthropy. Some people challenge his “top” lists and ideas in his book, but people are listening to him as his thinking develops.

Elizabeth Darling
President & CEO
OneStar Foundation
Austin, Texas

Former COO of the Corporation for National and Community Service, chair of Campfire USA and personal connections everywhere from the White House to the state house make Darling a powerhouse. Cross-pollinating between nonprofits and government isn’t unique, but coupling it with operational experience at the highest levels makes her special.

Tim Delaney
President & CEO
National Council of Nonprofits
Washington, D.C.

Delaney will tell whoever has an available ear that nonprofits might not merely be the next place for people in need to turn but the only place to which they can turn. His battle continues when it comes to federal budget cuts but he is taking it to the states, backed by NCN’s roughly 25,000 members.

James Firman
President & CEO
National Council on Aging
Washington, D.C.

There is nobody better at economic security and aging than Firman. Not only is he a policy guy depended on by lawmakers, but – wait for it – he helps other organizations deliver on their programs in an increasingly competitive population segment. Millions of Americans have been helped via the Benefits Checkup program. That’s its impact.

Brian Gallagher
President & CEO
United Way Worldwide
Alexandria, Va.

Gallagher adds his ideas at the World Economic Forum (WEF), Clinton Global Initiative and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), among other elite gatherings. He preaches that normative behavior evolves before policies change because cooperation (APEC), among other elite gatherings. He preaches that normative behavior evolves before policies change because
when you think about associations. It’s near the top of Graham’s list. Whether it is technology or people, Graham understands demographics and moves association thinking because in the long run, influence is all about people and influence is the juice Washington runs on.

Chad Griffin
President
Human Rights Campaign
Washington, D.C.

Griffin has used the legal system and the court of public opinion to successfully push equity issues faster than previously thought possible. He even got the opponents in Gore v. Bush to work together on equity issues. That’s not hard for a guy from a town called Hope (Ark.).

Paul Grogan
President & CEO
The Boston Indicators Project
Boston, Mass.

Two words: Understanding Boston. Here are four more: The Boston Indicators Project. Grogan knows and understands his town. He holds nonprofit leaders accountable for the financial help and is one of the best at proactive grantmaking. Proactive and accountable are not mutually exclusive. He’s a national community development leader.

Jacob Harold
CEO
GuideStar
Washington, D.C.

Harold is leading the sector’s data change movement. It’s all about actionable data. He’s pushing nonprofits to agree on basic data standards that will then move to transparency so donors and sector leaders understand that information regarding a small homeless shelter is not the same as that of a housing authority or healthcare facility.

Stephen Heintz
President
Rockefeller Brothers Fund
New York, N.Y.

Heintz gets the irony that a foundation endowed from the oil business focuses on efforts to curtail use of fossil fuels. His ideas on civic engagement are just as bold and the foundation is hankering new ideas. It’s all about his continued commitment to national-scale public engagement and an evolving theory of change.

John H. Graham IV
President & CEO
ASAE/The Center for Association Leadership
Washington, D.C.

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Eileen R. Heisman
President & CEO
National Philanthropic Trust
Jenkintown, Pa.

There is no question that in the roughly $45 billion donor advised fund world she is the most recognized face and not just in the U.S. She was invited by the Chinese government to speak to their emerging nonprofit sector. And, she is bringing the DAF concept to Europe; opening NPT (UK) Limited.

Melanie L. Herman
Executive Director
Nonprofit Risk Management Center
Leesburg, Va.

Herman helps some of the nation’s largest nonprofits work through risk issues and then helps smaller organizations apply the knowledge. A sought-after speaker on the topic, her seminars and conferences on the topic are so packed with data and information that they rival a full-blown MBA program.

Dara Richardson-Heron, M.D.
Chief Executive Officer
YWCA USA
Washington, D.C.

When Richardson-Heron interviews job applicants she asks them for a one-word description of themselves. Here’s one for her and YWCA – access. She makes sure doors are opened for women – access in healthcare, access in job equity, access to opportunities for leadership. You simply can’t say “no” to her.

Jo Ann Jenkins
Executive Vice President/Chief Operating Officer
AARP
Washington, D.C.

Jenkins takes over the top AARP job next month. It is well deserved. Everything she touches changes. With AARP getting more competition, she is leading the organization into communities with innovative programs that train low-income older Americans for today’s jobs via program-related investments and services. It isn’t about retiring anymore.

Nick Johnson
Vice President, State Fiscal Policy
Center on Budget and Policy Priorities
Washington, D.C.

There is nobody better on how state budget and tax decisions affect low-income families and communities. He’s helping to fight Taxpayer Bill of Rights legislation state by state. They don’t try to be everywhere. Johnson attaches to effective people already in the field and gives them the tools and support needed.

Irv Katz
President
National Human Services Assembly
Washington, D.C.

Reframing human services is becoming a buzz phrase in that slice of the sector. Katz’s belief that there is a gap between what human services experts say and what the public believes is starting to take hold. It’s a slog, with Katz seeking a way to help people make informed judgments regarding public resources and human needs on the national agenda.

Sr. Georgette Lehmuth
President & CEO
National Catholic Development Conference
Hempstead, N.Y.

Sr. Georgette has taken a religion-focused association and turned it into a force for member education and legislative issues such as postage rates, the charitable deduction, and the extension of the IRA charitable rollover. Because she’s an easy and skilled collaborator, her opinions hold weight in the religious and secular fundraising sectors.

Bill Gates
Co-Founder
Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation
Seattle, Wash.

After eradicating a few diseases, Gates is turning his sights on education. Along with others, he bet (wrongly) $100 million on a firm that would collect data on Common Core education. The idea is to tailor education using technology and data. He understands that one plus one still equals two everywhere and is pushing others to agree that is the case.

Jim Gibbons
President & CEO
Goodwill Industries
Rockville, Md.

Gibbons is turning an old horse into a social entrepreneur outpost. His Donate Movement is pure corporate social responsibility tied to technology, image and messaging. The organization remains a retailing behemoth while developing services that are sustainable and have social impact for constituents. He’s called it an evolving brand and he’s correct.

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Name one person who has been key to building more organizations from almost nothing in a sometimes controversial area than Lewis has done with vulnerable youth and for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender equality. Go ahead. We’ll wait. It’s not just advocacy and twisting arms. It’s also about strong programmatic direction.

Ludwig is a superstar in the world of nonprofit finance and housing. Roughly 35 percent of Americans are renters. That number has steadily increased the past few years and will continue. Affordable housing is again center stage and Ludwig is finding the funding for and facilitating multifamily rental housing while influencing Washington’s wallets.

Lynch can deal. There was the merger of the National Assembly of Local Arts Agencies and the American Council for the Arts to form Americans for the Arts. Next were the mergers of the Arts and Business Council and the Business Committee for the Arts into AFTA. His National Arts Index gives groups a tool to show local economic impact.

Lavizzo-Mourey understands that healthcare, just like politics, is intrinsically local, even for an international foundation. She was talking about childhood obesity before it was a cause-celeb. She sees the long-term but creates shorter-term benchmarks via RWJF’s strategy. She’s an international health policy leader who isn’t a wonk.

The Y is often a community’s center – the gym, the pool, daycare, and, oh yeah, obesity and diabetes clinical trials. Nicoll has ingeniously turned the Y into a full-on wellness center and has found federal government dollars to fund the initiatives. The Y brand is evolving under his stewardship from “service provider” to a “cause.”

Voting rights for animals? Pacelle and HSUS backed an animal protection initiative that will be on the Michigan ballot this November. He has played a role in the passage of more than two-dozen federal statutes and 26 successful statewide ballot initiatives, which is why he is a punching bag for puppy mills and pseudo-PR firms that profit from animal cruelty.

It’s not about star power at EIF. Well, yes it is, but it’s also about outcomes. This war on cancer is a deeply personal one for EIF’s leadership. It is clear they will find the money, fund the research and build dream teams of doctors. Paulsen and her team have permanently changed the way healthcare funding is obtained and disseminated.

Piraino is correct when he says despite “hard work by compassionate people with good intentions, child welfare systems still produce too many poor outcomes.” He built a network of 77,000 volunteers serving 245,000 kids trying to turn that around. He knows accountability and ethics is for both nonprofits and government.

Purvis runs what is described as the backbone of the emergency food supply in New York City. Wherever she’s worked she’s left behind a sustaining infrastructure. She’s establishing access in all five boroughs after Superstorm Sandy shutdown the bridges and tunnels and partnering with non-traditional donors, such as department stores.

Ross was a champion for children’s health coverage long before the Affordable Care Act. There is no doubt he is one of the most influential civic leaders in health policy. Ross has led amazing work on boys and men of color that has gained notice from the White House. He yields a lot of influence with his peers.

The ability to gather in public places is at the core of civil society. It is getting harder to do that around the world and even here in the U.S. His brilliant co-authored article Fighting for the Public Square is a clarion call for anyone working in the sector. He works to develop effective nonprofits across the globe in some very bad neighborhoods.

Saenz takes on government and big business, scoring important social and economic wins while heading the legal voice for Latino civil rights. A leader of The National Hispanic Leadership Agenda, his work with immigration, voting and education got him an invitation to the White House as a Champion of Change.
John R. Seffrin
CEO
American Cancer Society
Atlanta, Ga.

There are few executives who could pull off what Seffrin did in consolidating and reorganizing a 100-year-old behemoth. Even though the search for his successor has begun, he has plenty left in the tank and the reorganization is a model for other groups to replicate.

Michael Silberman
Global Director, Digital Mobilisation Lab
Greenpeace
Washington, D.C.

To grow as a social action campaigner you need the Digital Mobilisation Lab. (Yes, it’s spelled correctly.) Techies are talking about scaling “Moblab” outside Greenpeace. Silberman is a game-changer on the use of participatory strategies and technologies that emphasize and explain context, have a global viewpoint and tangible takeaways.

Rev. Larry Snyder
President
Catholic Charities USA
Alexandria, Va.

Rev. Snyder is a widely respected leader from the parochial sphere who stays connected to the secular world. He is a real bridge at a time when the others have pulled back. He pushed government, business, and academia to raise the issue of poverty in the national conversation.

Patty Stonesifer
President & CEO
Martha’s Table
Washington, D.C.

The former head of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation is proving “big vision” translates to small organizations. She uses her celebrity to make connections to improve the lives of kids and operations, such as pop-up grocery markets and a training center for parents. Always the techie, she’s collecting data from which others can model.

Eugene R. Tempel
Founding Dean
Indiana University Lilly Family School of Philanthropy
Indianapolis, Ind.

Tempel heads the nation’s first school of philanthropy and there wouldn’t be one without his decades of dedication to the concept of learning about giving. Even though he’s slated to retire soon, he’ll still be around the sector pushing for new ideas powered by research and accumulated knowledge.

Henry Timms
Executive Director
92nd Street Y
New York, N.Y.

It is too early to know if #GivingTuesday will be an important giving and advocacy technique or the next philanthropic pet rock, but Timms pioneered the concept which turns three this year. Many of the second’s major players are on board now. He also was key in establishing the Social Good Summit, with Mashable and the UN Foundation.

Michael Waldman
President
The Brennan Center For Justice
New York, N.Y.

Waldman is a clarion legal voice for progressives, even though the center is nonpartisan. His rhetoric pushes the Constitutional envelope. He is advocating for ideas for political process reform including voter registration modernization and developed proposals that give shareholders a voice in how corporate managers, under Citizens United, spend funds.

Andrew Watt
President & CEO
Association of Fundraising Professionals
Arlington, Va.

While many in Washington, D.C., were being too polite when it came to the assault on the tax deduction for contributions, Watt didn’t mince words: “It’s clear the Obama Administration is still not getting the message,” he wrote to AFP’s members. He’s pushing professionalization of fundraising here and internationally.

The NonProfit Times prides itself on being the one-stop source for all your nonprofit information and resource needs. Our online Resource Marketplace showcases hundreds of suppliers and service providers that serve the nonprofit sector, offering a unique and vital understanding of the particular needs of organizations like yours. Whether you’re seeking cutting-edge technology to improve your website, ways to improve your fundraising efforts, or innovative accounting solutions, the Resource Marketplace is the place to begin your search.

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