

# Follow the Money: New Venture Fund playing big in Mississippi #Initiative42

by Frank Corder

You may recall that we here at Y'all Politics have been [documenting the Democrat front group](#) "Better Schools Better Jobs" over the last few months.

Most Mississippians, however, have never heard of the major donor behind their efforts - the New Venture Fund - and have no idea why they would be throwing over \$1.5 million into a convoluted campaign to amend the Mississippi state constitution.

As of the [May 2015 filing](#), Washington D.C. based New Venture Fund has contributed over \$712,000 to the Better Schools Better Jobs campaign advocating for Initiative 42 in Mississippi this year. That amount is in addition to the over \$864,000 the New Venture Fund donated to the same PAC in 2014.

For your edification and consideration, I hope to provide some context to that below.

New Venture Fund was established in 2006 as a 501(c)(3) that, according to its [website](#), "supports innovative and effective public interest projects..." NVF executes "a range of donor-driven public interest projects in conservation, global health, public policy, international development, education, disaster recovery, and the arts."

NVF's [2013 990 form](#) shows its net assets at \$80 million and describes its areas of emphasis as follows:

- Health Programs "including human rights, development aid, family planning, tobacco control, cross-cultural exchangers, sanitation, infectious and easily preventable diseases, coordination of pharmaceutical research, and conflict resolution"

- Environmental Programs "include ocean and river conservation, alternative energy sources and reduction of fossil fuels, protection of ocean life, wildlands conservation, ecological agriculture, and habitat restoration."

- Education Programs include "connect learning, support to teachers and other educational professionals, advocacy for effective teaching practices, early learning in vulnerable populations, literacy, and support for the common core initiative."

NVF lists among its highest compensated independent contractors Arabella Advisors (management consulting) and Hilltop Public Solutions (political consulting).

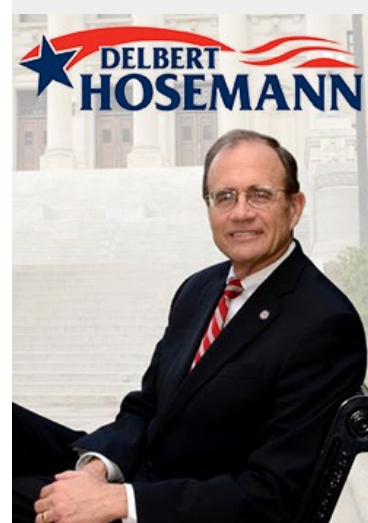
Arabella Advisors made \$5.5 million from NVF in 2013. That's not a bad day's haul for Eric Kessler, who by the way is the founder of [Arabella Advisors](#) and the New Venture Fund.

Hilltop Public Solutions is a liberal firm who has led Democratic campaigns across the country. A number of [its team members](#) previously worked with Planned Parenthood, Sierra Club and other high profile liberal causes.

I specifically mention Planned Parenthood due to a discussion state Rep. Jeff Smith had with Paul Gallo on SuperTalk last Thursday. Rep. Smith pointed to the New Venture Fund's connection to the controversial organization.

Here are two examples:

- Women's Equality Center is fiscally sponsored by the New Venture Fund. This organization wrote



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on their [website](#) on July 28, 2015 that “It’s been a tough few weeks for Planned Parenthood...” and then it encourages its readers to stand with Planned Parenthood saying, “To stand against the ideologues who want to deny women the right to health care and abortion by destroying PPFA, sign the petition affirming support for the critical services that Planned Parenthood provides every day. And, check out PPFA’s website for resources to educate others about the truth.”

- GenderAvenger is also a project of the New Venture Fund. This group states as its [mission](#), “To build a community that ensures women are represented in the public dialog.” Sounds reasonable on the surface, until you read “Founding Avenger” Gina’s bio:

Gina Glantz: Serial organizer/shit stirrer/campaign tech innovator/grandmother. First political campaign managed: a surprise win of a Democrat for Congress in a NJ district that was represented at the time by the longest serving Republican in the House. Last campaign managed: a not-so-surprising defeat of Bill Bradley by Al Gore for the Democratic presidential nomination. Founded Martin&Glantz, specializing in grassroots organizing and communications strategies. Senior Advisor to President of the Service Employees International Union. Harvard Kennedy School Institute of Politics Fellow and Shorenstein Center Adjunct Lecturer. Planned Parenthood Action Fund, DEMOS and Oxfam-America Board Member.

The connection between what New Venture Fund fiscally supports and liberal causes globally, including the efforts of Planned Parenthood and its supporters, cannot be denied. It is prevalent throughout the list of contributions.

I would encourage every Mississippi voter heading to the polls this November to question why such a liberally supportive group is pumping millions in our state to influence your child’s education and our appropriation process in the Legislature.

One thing is for sure... Better Schools Better Jobs, by virtue of the financial support its taking and the partisan folks on its staff, is nothing more than a better funded front for Democrats in Mississippi. This has become an “elephants vs. donkeys” issue trying to wrap itself in the safe political imagery of kids and education.

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