

Bill Schechter

Bill Schechter, although now retired, has been a consultant to non-profit organizations, foundations, and government agencies. His portfolio of work and expertise included school reform, local governance and citizen participation; collaboration, consensus and community building; visioning and strategic planning; community planning, development, and environmental protection. He provided technical assistance and coaching, training and presentations, process and meeting design and facilitation, research on promising practices, and policy development.

Schechter was the coordinator of Collaboration DC, a network of practitioners working to build civic capacity and solve community problems in the Nation's Capital. Other projects included staffing the workgroups on facilities and after-school programs for the DC Education Compact; assisting DC Public Schools in the preparation and community reviews of the Master Education Plan, and facilitating community forums on the Master Facility Plan.

Schechter worked from 1995 to mid-2003 at the National Civic League in its Washington, DC Office. He served as senior fellow and then director of the Program for Community Problem Solving (PCPS), director of the DC office, director of Community Services-DC, and senior associate for federal-community partnerships. He worked directly with communities, and in partnerships with foundations and government agencies, to design, support, and assess collaborative approaches to policy decisions, program design, systems reform, and community visioning, strategic planning, and change efforts. This included working with community collaboratives participating in national demonstration initiatives, and providing training in the "Together We Can" approach to collaboration.

Schechter's career has spanned the public, private and non-profit sectors, and has included positions at the national, state, and local levels. He started working in anti-poverty programs as a fieldman for the Appalachian Volunteers in Mingo County, West Virginia. He then served as issues coordinator for a state elected official, Jay Rockefeller, in Charleston, the state capital. After directing the Urban Affairs Center at West Virginia State College, he was the national director of state legislative affairs for the United Mine Workers of America, moving then to Washington, DC.

After serving as a project officer at HUD's Office of Neighborhood Development, Schechter became a senior associate at the Institute for Economic Development, and then served as interim director of the Rural Coalition. He then moved to Castle Rock, in Colorado's Front Range where he joined a small family business, serving as a commercial/industrial real estate broker and property manager, and became active in local government and politics, including election to a home rule charter commission, city council, and serving as mayor. He moved back to Washington, DC in mid-1994 and lived in Foggy Bottom until 2016 when he and his wife Claudia, a non-profit management consultant, moved to Portland, Oregon.

In DC, the Schechters lived in the 270-unit Potomac Plaza Apartments Cooperative for 19 years where Bill served on the board of directors for 5 years, including 3 years as president. In Portland, they live in the 10-story Park Vista Cooperative where Bill chaired the building committee for 4 years, and before that was a member of the community life committee.

Schechter earned a BA in sociology and anthropology at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota after studying abroad for a year at Osmania University in Hyderabad, India. He then did graduate work in sociology at the Universities of Pennsylvania and Chicago. More recently he earned a MPA at the University of Colorado at Denver and worked on a Ph.D. in public administration, focused on governance and public involvement issues.