

40
YEARS OF COMMUNITY IMPACT

COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION
of Sarasota County

SPRING 2020 NEWSLETTER



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Our Mission

Community Impact Powered by Philanthropy

Our Work

We unite people and organizations to create opportunities for families across generations to improve their lives through cultural, educational, economic, and social support.

Every one of us has the potential to impact another person, a cause, a community. Be The One.

LETTER FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR AND PRESIDENT/CEO

Dear Friends:

As we write this letter, the world as we knew it has drastically changed. Across our community, we each have personally experienced the isolation of social distancing, the challenges faced by beloved local businesses and nonprofit organizations, and the poignant fear of the unknown. While these are unsettling times for all of us, our community stands as connected and united as ever, embarking on the path to a brighter future paved by our shared hope and generosity.

Over the last few months, we have seen this hope take shape in our community's efforts to safely navigate through the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, overcoming hurdles of uncertainty and instability with great resiliency, strength, and courage.

In the face of unprecedented need, donors reached out with a remarkable outpouring of support and empathy, while nonprofit and community partners rapidly mobilized their networks and resources to extend a lifeline to our most vulnerable families and individuals. Moreover, collaborative initiatives such as Season of Sharing and the 2020 Giving Challenge enhanced and augmented these strategies for short-term response and set the stage for a longer-term recovery.

Even in ordinary times, collaboration across sectors is essential to building the community we all want to live in. By focusing on what is possible and achievable together, we all have an opportunity to consider how we can offer solutions and be the one to make a lasting difference in another's life.

While many of the stories within this newsletter were written before the COVID-19 pandemic, they illuminate an important and undeniable truth: as a community foundation, we exist first and foremost to serve our community, especially in times of critical need. Throughout our 40-year history, the

Community Foundation has been a trusted partner for those with the vision and heart to create opportunities and improve lives across generations. Together with our donors and nonprofit partners, this community impact philosophy will continue to guide us for the next four weeks, four months, and onward to 40 years and beyond.

As you read these stories about the collective impact of Giving Circles (see page 8), the legacy of leadership entrusted to us by Stewart Stearns (see page 10), and the digital and emotional connectivity of the Giving Challenge (see page 12), we hope you are inspired and reassured by our community's unwavering passion and willingness to give back.

In moments like this, philanthropy is truly a beacon of hope for so many people and organizations. While we face a future clouded by doubt and uncertainty, and it likely won't be easy in the short-term, it is up to each one of us to ensure our community remains healthy, resilient, and united so that we all can thrive and realize our full potential. Together.

Take care, be safe, and stay healthy.

With gratitude,



Nelle Miller, Board Chair



Roxanne G. Jerde, President and CEO



As a testament of our community's inherent generosity and selflessness, Season of Sharing witnessed an outpouring of support since its reactivation in March (left), several hundred nonprofits came together during the 2020 Giving Challenge and helped develop the #WeAreOne video (center), and several nonprofits received Healthcare Grants provided by the James Franklin Warnell & Dorothy J. Warnell Fund (right).

Response & Recovery

HOW CHARITABLE GIVING ADDS SUPPORT IN TIMES OF CRISIS AND BEYOND

Editor's Note: This piece was produced at the end of March and early April 2020, shortly after the declaration of the COVID-19 pandemic. For the latest news on our continuing community support, please visit cfsarasota.org. A version of this article will appear in the Herald Tribune "Style" Magazine in June 2020.

In times of crisis, communities come together in many different ways. Our government agencies offer relief and emergency support. Business leaders come together to advocate for and drive economic relief. And in times of crisis, many of us want to help our neighbors, which often results in a surge of charitable giving.

Philanthropic support adds another layer of care to other means such as public, government, and private funding. Among the many charitable entities that provide critical support and resources to our most vulnerable, community foundations are uniquely

situated to bridge these channels of assistance to shine as a beacon of hope for people and organizations alike during uncertain times.

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to disrupt lives across our local and global community, community foundations are turning to their trusted networks to coordinate an effective response and extend a critical lifeline of support to those in need. The response has been unbelievably heartening. As of late March 2020, since the outbreak began in the U.S., some 170 community foundations have activated COVID-19

“More than ever, each one of us can be the one to ensure our community remains healthy, resilient, and united so that we all can thrive and realize our full potential. Together with our donors and nonprofit partners, we can truly make a difference now and for what lies ahead.” –Roxie Jerde, President and CEO

response funds with more than \$238.7 million to tackle pervasive issues such as rising unemployment and loss of stability — income, housing, food, and otherwise.

Here in the greater Sarasota-Manatee area, several local community and private foundations have also enacted responses for immediate action, short-term relief, and to prepare for a longer-term recovery.

“We are fortunate to be part of a generous and resilient community,” says Roxie Jerde, President and CEO of the Community Foundation of Sarasota County. “In times of great uncertainty, foundations can be relied upon as trusted partners to shore up and rebuild the capacity of nonprofits and the lives of families and individuals they serve during and in the wake of COVID-19.”

As grantmaking public charities, community foundations steward and utilize charitable assets to ensure the vision of their donors — both past and present — has an enduring impact on their local communities. Just as this impact may take several unique forms, so too can the role of community foundations. From helping identify and address community needs to strengthening nonprofit organizations through grant opportunities, community foundations are no stranger to undertaking innovative, community-wide initiatives that bring together people and organizations for lasting change.

Response

As an initial response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Community Foundation of Sarasota County quickly reactivated its time-tested and trusted Season of Sharing community-wide partnership with the Herald-Tribune Media Group and nonprofit agency partners to be prepared to help the most vulnerable with immediate basic needs such as payments for utilities, childcare, and rent.



“As a community-wide campaign founded on collaboration and partnership, trust lies at the heart of Season of Sharing,” says Jerde. “Nonprofit organizations trust in the long-established processes put forth by the Community Foundation. Case workers and those they assist trust that their concerns will be heard and helped in a compassionate yet timely manner. Donors trust that 100% of their contribution will go to those local residents in need of help.”

For 20 years of the foundation’s 40-year history, this trust has grown into the hallmark of Season of Sharing and has empowered neighbors to help neighbors in need, providing nearly \$24 million in assistance to more than 35,000 families, seniors, and veterans to remain in their homes.

So it is not hard to imagine that, even in ordinary times, Season of Sharing is a vital safety net for those on the verge of homelessness and losing stability in Sarasota, Manatee, Charlotte, and DeSoto counties. As one of several options available to assist our community, all gifts made to the Season of Sharing response to COVID-19 will augment federal, state, and private measures.

Additionally, The Patterson Foundation, a longtime partner and supporter of Season of Sharing, committed up to \$1 million to strengthen this vital reactivation, including an immediate \$500,000 contribution along with an additional dollar-for-dollar match up to \$500,000 for all gifts made to Season of Sharing. In just 26 days, our community raised nearly

\$2 million with gifts ranging from \$15 to \$250,000, far surpassing the initial match and encouraging additional matching gifts. This includes another \$200,000 dollar-for-dollar matching gift from an anonymous donor and a \$100,000 from the Community Foundation's Board of Directors, which was also met in record time and providing \$2.4 million more in additional funds for distribution in the four-county region.

"While people navigate the evolving challenges COVID-19 presents in their own lives, they also want to know how to help others who find themselves facing uncharted financial trauma," said Debra Jacobs, President & CEO of The Patterson Foundation. "For 20 years, the Community Foundation of Sarasota County and the Herald-Tribune Media Group have harnessed Season of Sharing to help strengthen individuals and families in our region and move them from uncertainty to security. Season of Sharing's network offers donors a tried and true way to ensure their funds are administered effectively to those with immediate needs."

Requesting help through Season of Sharing involves working with a caseworker associated with a local human services agency, and families and individuals can access financial assistance up to \$1,800. The nonprofit organizations are then provided the funds to pay the rent, utility bill, or childcare providers on behalf of the client. All donations — 100% — goes directly to helping families stay in their homes.

Recovery

Efforts to rebuild and recover from a crisis as pressing as COVID-19 demand a robust combination of short-term and long-term strategies to ensure stability and growth remain achievable. In a matter of days, organizations across our region faced the unexpected, adjusting to changing needs the crisis had unveiled yet had not been evident previously, such as technological support, staff and infrastructure shortages, and supplies — medical, educational, financial — that were not as readily available as needed. As COVID-19 has uprooted traditional sources of income and fundraising, nonprofit organizations of all sizes look to philanthropy as a bond of dependability, one that has the resources and means to create and strengthen recovery strategies.

As one way to support local nonprofit and other community organizations on the frontlines engaging in short-term recovery efforts, the Community Foundation continued several long-standing grant opportunities available to enhance the wellbeing and resiliency of grantees, including a healthcare grant through the James Franklin Warnell & Dorothy J. Warnell Fund, and a rolling application cycle for "Community Impact Grants," which are offered to assist nonprofits with innovative ideas to assist critical needs.

DISASTER GIVING 101

The Center for Disaster Philanthropy (CDP) has shared helpful insights about how to help and give to those in need during the COVID-19 pandemic:

- **Start Local** | Give to existing funds to pool resources with other donors to maximize impact
- **Do your Research** | Go with trusted organizations that can utilize dollars to pivot, adjust, and respond accordingly and use local knowledge to dive deep into causes you care about
- **Identify Critical Needs** | Support vulnerable populations, medical needs, and mental health

Begin researching more than 700 area nonprofit organizations with The Giving Partner, your local resource for making informed charitable decisions in our community. Visit TheGivingPartner.org today to begin your search.

Another opportunity to strengthen our nonprofit community was the 2020 Giving Challenge, a 24-hour giving event held on April 28 and 29 that connected donors across our region with nearly 700 nonprofits to support a diversity of causes. Acting as one of several grant-funding tools available to help with our community's evolving response to the coronavirus pandemic, the unrestricted funds raised during the Giving Challenge were able to provide nonprofit partners the flexibility to respond to community needs, especially as those needs evolve and change. To strengthen this impact, The Patterson Foundation once again generously provided a 1:1 match for all unique donations made during the 2020 Giving Challenge from \$25 up to \$100 per donor, per organization. *(Editor's Note: See page 12 to review the history of the Giving Challenge and results from the 2020 online event).*

Innovating for the Unknown

Planning for the long term, the Community Foundation has collaborated with funders and other local foundations to listen and learn about different community needs affecting the nonprofit sector. As an early step in this process, a survey of nonprofit leaders was conducted in late March to gather preliminary information that would inform their next steps in coordinating resources to further support the changing government and private measures that are being developed.

"These efforts and others being carried out by public, government, and private organizations reflect that caring for community is part of our region's unique culture," says Jerde. "Time and time again, our community has shown that it has the compassion, generosity, and grit to rise to these adaptive challenges, stronger and more unified than ever before. COVID-19 is — and will be — no different. It will take all of us and, as I always say, 'all of us are smarter than one of us.'" (See sidebar about other available funds.)

The changes taking place in our community and across the world are constantly evolving. While our community is facing the unknown, community foundations are prepared to lead with values and leverage one another's strength through multi-sector collaboration to learn, innovate, and move forward together.

RESOURCES

Philanthropic Funds to support immediate, short-term, and long-term needs:

- **Season of Sharing**
Community Foundation of Sarasota County
cfsarasota.org/season-of-sharing
- **Manatee County COVID-19 Community Response Fund**
Manatee Community Foundation
manateecf.org/donate-today/
- **Coronavirus Fund**
United Way Suncoast
unitedwaysuncoast.org
- **COVID-19 Patient Care Fund**
Sarasota Memorial Healthcare Foundation
smhf.org
- **COVID-19 Response Initiative**
Gulf Coast Community Foundation
gulfcoastcf.org
- **Stronger Together Fund**
Jewish Federation of Sarasota-Manatee
jfedsrq.org
- **COVID-19 Education Relief Fund**
Education Foundation of Sarasota County
edfoundationsrq.org

"In moments like this, philanthropy can truly shine and be relied upon as a trusted partner, especially as the needs of our community continue to evolve daily," says Jerde. "More than ever, each one of us can be the one to ensure our community remains healthy, resilient, and united as we emerge from the ramifications of COVID-19 so that we all can thrive and realize our full potential. Together with our donors and nonprofit partners, we can truly make a difference now and for what lies ahead. Our community and country are facing an unprecedented time. While the circumstances are evolving and we are facing the unknown, as a community foundation, we exist to serve our community, especially in times of critical need."

To support the Community Foundation's response to COVID-19 through Season of Sharing, visit cfsarasota.org/season-of-sharing. 

GIVING CIRCLES MAKE A COLLECTIVE IMPACT ON LOCAL NONPROFITS

Marilyn Thompson was a newcomer to the Sarasota area in 2013. Like many moving here, she knew she wanted to get involved in the community but wasn't sure where to put her time and resources. At that same time, the Community Foundation of Sarasota County was educating potential donors about the benefits of Giving Circles.

With the help of the Community Foundation, Thompson connected with Sheila Baynes and a handful of other African-American women to form a Giving Circle they named Masala, after the blend of spices "the whole of which is richer and more amazing than the sum of its aromatic parts." Baynes served as

the group's inaugural president, and Thompson was connected with a group of like-minded women who wanted to make a difference.

Giving Circles like Masala are groups of individuals who collectively agree to donate a set amount of money each year to support organizations or projects of mutual interest. Members determine which organizations or projects are funded. By pooling resources, people can have a greater impact than they could by contributing as individuals. The Community Foundation currently hosts three Giving Circles, including Masala, Athena Progressive Giving Circle, and Our Sarasota Fund, a group of community



The Masala Giving Circle presents a check to The Five Pearls of Excellence, a mentoring program for girls, as part of their 2017 grant opportunity. Photo includes: Masala Members, Grant Recipients, and Shelia Baynes (Founder).

members interested in providing grants to programs and organizations that have a focus on improving the lives of Sarasota's LGBTQ community.

Masala's goal is to leverage its members' common passion for giving back and helping others to create positive change in the African-American communities of Sarasota and Manatee Counties. Through 2019, the group has made 17 grants totaling \$51,700 to fund programs ranging from fighting human trafficking to making mammograms more accessible to African-American women to establishing a farmer's market in the Newtown neighborhood. Membership in the circle has grown from 10 to 68 members, each of whom contributes at least \$300 per year toward grantmaking.

"There's been a real strong interest and a commitment, and people stick with it," said Thompson, Masala's current president and a member of the Community Foundation's board of directors. The small annual contribution commitment has helped Masala attract a membership that ranges from young employees of nonprofits to corporate retirees.

Another circle is the Athena Progressive Giving Circle, which has 11 members who each contribute \$1,500 per year, and stays small intentionally.

"The people who join Athena don't want to be part of an organization that is 50 people because they are very hands-on," said Dorothy O'Brien, who coordinates the Athena group.

Athena, which also originated in 2013, focuses on programs that improve the lives of women and girls in the Sarasota-Manatee area and chooses one project a year to fund. Its projects have ranged from funding a food truck for a woman seeking to move her family out of poverty to support for UnidosNow's Future Leaders Academy for Girls (FLAG), which provides Latino girls with the skills needed to pursue higher education. Since its inception, Athena has funded 20 projects totaling \$128,500.

Giving as Groups

While both Giving Circles have a common goal of pooling their members' money to fund local nonprofits, there are differences in how they are organized.


Masala has a formal organizational structure and more administrative challenges due to its growth. Thompson credits the group's success to a strong leadership team that includes LaVerne Green, Vice President; Connie Anderson, Treasurer; Margaret Harrison, Secretary; and Phyllis Moran, Member at Large. The much smaller Athena circle has no officers and even O'Brien, who serves as the group's coordinator, eschews a title.

Masala solicits grant applications each year from a wide variety of organizations serving the African-American community, without specifying a project focus. Those applications are turned over to a grant committee, which recommends which projects to fund. After "a lot of back and forth discussion," the entire membership votes on whether to approve those recipients and funding levels.

Each year, Athena selects a specific project within its broader focus on benefitting women and girls. It relies on the Community Foundation, along with its tool, www.TheGivingPartner.org, to help identify eligible projects and to send those organizations grant applications. "We work through the Community Foundation and The Giving Partner so we don't have to vet every organization," O'Brien said. "If it's good enough for the Community Foundation, it's good enough for us."

O'Brien sends the completed applications to each Athena member to review before the group meets to determine funding. They strive for a consensus decision, O'Brien says, but occasionally two or three organizations receive strong support, so a site visit is scheduled to determine which one will be chosen.

In addition to help with identifying worthy nonprofits that fit the Giving Circle's mission, there are other benefits to working through the Community Foundation. Giving Circles partnered with foundations don't need to create a 501(c)(3). The foundation can help the circle members develop grantmaking bylaws and guidelines. The foundation also creates a Donor Advised Fund for each giving circle, provides accounting support, manages investment of the money, provides meeting space, and helps with due diligence, according to Katie Schwabach, Philanthropy Advisor at the Community Foundation.

"We are here as their resource to figure out how to do strategic grantmaking well," said Schwabach. 

A LEGACY OF COMMUNITY BUILDING: STEWART STEARNS (1947-2019)

Stewart Stearns forged connections –between foundations and other institutions that could accomplish more together than separately; between individuals struggling in hard times and those who would be touched by their stories and contribute whatever they could to help; between nonprofits in need of money and people with money to give.

Stearns died December 7, 2019, at age 72 after battling autoimmune diseases for several years. He left behind his wife of 50 years, Marji; two adult children, Teri and Greg; and a legacy of community building.

As its first full-time President and CEO, Stearns played a crucial role in developing the Community Foundation of Sarasota County into a vital force in the philanthropic world of Southwest Florida. During his 22-year tenure (1988-2010), its assets grew from \$334,000 to more than \$163 million. He launched key initiatives including Season of Sharing and Literacy Empowers All Families (LEAF) and oversaw construction of the Leila and Michael Gompertz Center, the foundation's home on Fruitville Road.

A Celebration of Life at that center in January 2020 honored his contributions to the Community Foundation and the broader community. Susie Bowie, who worked for Stearns early in her career, and now executive director of the Manatee Community Foundation, a supporting organization of the Community Foundation, recalled his passion for helping nonprofits develop.

“Stewart loved being part of work that really pulled people together,” said Bowie. “He was never above meeting with someone from a small nonprofit who wanted his ear. He also had a gigantic heart for people who had fallen on hard times. He knew that even an ethic of hard work was often not enough to help people who had lost their homes during hard times.”

Steve Dahlquist, who served on the Community Foundation's Executive Committee during Stearns' tenure, said helping other organizations and foundations find ways to thrive exemplifies Stearns' philosophy of community building.

“It was never about competing with another organization, or being better than or taking money away from other organizations,” he said. “He helped other organizations and he would find ways for everyone to benefit.”

Dahlquist cited the Leila and Michael Gompertz Center as an example. Originally over-built with an eye to future growth, the lower floor was unfinished for the first couple of years. But when Stearns recognized that many smaller organizations needed a venue for conferences and events, the empty space was built-out and offered at no charge to nonprofit groups.

As dedicated as he was to his work, Stearns was also a devoted husband and father.

“He was a total hands-on dad—changing diapers, giving them baths, playing with them,” Marji Stearns said. “He took every opportunity that came along to do things we could do together as a family.”

Stewart and Marji met while they were both attending Eastern New Mexico University. After their marriage in 1969, he pursued a master's degree, first at Southern Methodist University in Dallas and later at Northern Illinois University, where he taught linguistics and anthropology. He continued his advanced education at State University of New York in Albany. That led to a multi-year research project in Guatemala, where he studied native Spanish and indigenous cultures. After his medical retirement in 2010, Stearns drew on his experiences as a young graduate student to write a series of mystery novels set in Guatemala.



Stewart Stearns and late Betty Schoenbaum share a smile at the Community Foundation. Stearns' legacy of leadership, collaboration, and commitment to community is brightly illuminated by Schoenbaum's favorite saying, "The joy of living is the joy of giving."

Before coming to Sarasota in 1988, Stearns held positions with the United Way in Roswell, N.M.; the Levi Strauss Foundation; and the North Texas Community Foundation in Ft. Worth. The move to the then-small and low profile organization known as the Sarasota County Community Foundation (Stearns renamed it Community Foundation of Sarasota County to put the emphasis on "community," according to Dahlquist) offered him the opportunity to put his communications skills to work.

"He liked speaking with people. He was good one-to-one and he was a good public speaker," Marji Stearns said. "He just wanted to know everything about what he could do to help. Everywhere he went he was trying to make a difference."

His people skills also helped him engage donors, starting with Leila and Michael Gompertz, who became close friends, Marji Stearns said. They liked his ideas and introduced him to other people. "He was always interested in people and what their interests were. He was a good listener, but he had good ideas, too," she added. Those ideas and his ability to

collaborate with other community leaders made a fundamental difference.

For example, Diane McFarlin, then editor of the Herald-Tribune, came to Stearns with her concerns about homelessness in Sarasota. That grew into a partnership between the newspaper and the Community Foundation to help families avoid homelessness called Season of Sharing. Now starting its third decade, Season of Sharing enables neighbors to help neighbors by collecting donations of all sizes. Nonprofit partners distribute the funds to people in economic crisis to pay utility bills, rent, childcare, and other expenses. The campaign has raised nearly \$24 million and assisted more than 35,000 people.

A tribute in the Herald-Tribune summed up Stearns' legacy: "...It was the connections Stew forged, between people who had cash and those who needed it, between people with good ideas and those who could execute them—that helped create a template for efficient regional collaboration that continues to distinguish Southwest Florida from other places where wealth and poverty exist side by side." 🏡

The Giving Challenge: Then and Now

THE GIVING CHALLENGE: ENHANCING TRANSPARENCY WHILE ENCOURAGING GIVING

Take a successful online fundraising event, add an enhanced tool for helping people make informed giving decisions, and it's win-win-win for local nonprofits, donors, and the community.

Eight years ago, the Community Foundation of Sarasota County launched the Giving Challenge to encourage local nonprofits to create profiles with The Giving Partner, its online tool designed to increase nonprofit transparency and encourage philanthropy. It worked.

That first Giving Challenge raised \$2.4 million for 107 nonprofit participants. Fast forward to the 2020 Giving Challenge, held from noon to noon on April 28-29, when nearly 59,000 total donors contributed more than \$18 million in 24 hours to benefit 686 nonprofit organizations. This was an important resource for nonprofit organizations to raise unrestricted funds especially facing uncertainty during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic (see page 4).

"It's become a real pride point for our community, demonstrating how generous and passionate people are about nonprofits and their missions," said Roxie Jerde, President and CEO of the Community Foundation, noting that the low minimum gift of \$25 attracts donors across a range of ages and incomes. "It gives everyone the opportunity to impact a cause and ultimately the community."

The impressive growth in Giving Challenge contributions goes hand-in-hand with the growth of The Giving Partner, which now hosts over 800 nonprofit profiles detailing financial, leadership, and organizational information as well as goals and accomplishments. This year, the Community Foundation unveiled a more-user friendly Giving Partner with enhanced functionality benefiting both donors and nonprofits.

By making nonprofit information available 24/7, The Giving Partner fosters understanding of evolving community needs throughout Sarasota, Manatee, Charlotte, and DeSoto counties. It expands visibility for the organizations addressing those challenges, including social justice, hunger and poverty, the environment, education, animal protection, and arts and culture.

The revamped Giving Partner includes a custom-built platform that connects donors and volunteers with causes they care about, while offering nonprofits improved ways to share the impact of their work. The new functionality also enables the Community Foundation to share trendlines in the nonprofit sector with individuals, local and regional units of government, and other organizations.

Initially conceived as a three-year project to incentivize nonprofits to populate The Giving Partner, the Giving Challenge has continued through seven incarnations to promote the value of philanthropy throughout the region, encouraging nonprofits to partner with local businesses and other nonprofits and build community.

A key factor in the Giving Challenge's success has been the Community Foundation's partnership with The Patterson Foundation, which provides matching funds and prizes to incentivize donor participation. In the Giving Challenge's first year, \$334,000 in matching funds was gone in the first four minutes. This year, The Patterson Foundation matched every donation between \$25 and \$100 from a unique donor to that organization. Theoretically, a donor could have given \$100 to each of the 686 participating nonprofits and The Patterson Foundation would have matched the entire gift. While communities across the country have giving days, the Giving Challenge is believed to be the only one that offers this unlimited match.



Presented by the
Community Foundation of Sarasota County

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
OF SARASOTA COUNTY
PRESENTS



Be The One



"The Patterson Foundation wants to shift the dynamic so everyone can be a donor and everyone can make a difference," said Debra Jacobs, President and CEO of The Patterson Foundation. "The Giving Challenge is a time the community can come together and say 'I am part of something bigger than myself.' You build community when people feel they are part of something bigger."


The Patterson Foundation also contributed \$51,000 in prizes, awarded to nonprofits in three budget categories — small, medium, and large — with the most unique donors per hour. An online leaderboard encouraged donors to step up to keep their favorite organizations in contention, making it a fun and friendly competition.

"The Giving Challenge engages people and strengthens organizations and the community," said Jacobs. "Every organization is doing important work. But we must find a way to have a bit of fun while doing important work. The Giving Challenge allows for that."

Other foundations (including the William G. and Marie Selby Foundation, Manatee Community Foundation, and Charlotte Community Foundation), the Community Foundation of Sarasota County, and media partners provided prizes totaling more than \$200,000 to spur creative partnerships and marketing efforts. They included awards for the best nonprofit to nonprofit partnership, best nonprofit to business partnership, best social media campaign, and best campaign video.

If donors choose the option of covering the cost of their credit card transaction, the nonprofit receives 100 percent of the gift and match because the Community Foundation covers all the administrative costs. "We do it as a gift to our community," Jerde said.

During Giving Challenge years, the Community Foundation of Sarasota County provides free training sessions for nonprofits which emphasize creative marketing strategies and social media proficiency as well as stewardship and marketing skills.

"We focus the training to provide opportunities to strengthen the skill sets that a nonprofit needs to be successful, skills that last beyond that one day," Jerde said. "That is the true purpose of the Giving Challenge and The Giving Partner — to support and enhance our nonprofits to make our entire community better." 

LEADERSHIP

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(2019-2020)

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Weston Whitham, *Facilities Coordinator*

COMMUNITY IMPACT PHILOSOPHY

We believe that each one of us has the potential to impact a person, a cause, a community. It is this idea that powers our community impact philosophy revolving around Community Care, Empowerment and Success, and Belonging and Culture. Through these three impact areas, together we are building the community we all want to live in, one that encourages neighbors to help neighbors while empowering others to succeed and uphold their self-worth through education, and to create lifelong connections.



COMMUNITY CARE

Caring for our community means being a resource during challenging times. We are proud to respond to Emergency Needs & Disaster Relief and initiatives around Preventing Homelessness, that address Health & Hunger issues, provide care for Animals & the Environment, and assist with Placemaking through housing, transportation, and economic support.






EMPOWERMENT AND SUCCESS

A successful life is one filled with purpose. What that looks like for each of us differs, but the paths to reaching one's greatest potential are common to all of us. We invest in Education, Academic Enrichment, Career Development, Scholarships & Mentoring, and opportunities to create Lifelong Connections so that everyone can be empowered to realize their dreams.

BELONGING AND CULTURE

To have a place or group where you belong inspires passion and creativity. By supporting organizations whose work Bridges Generations and Unites the Community around Cultural Development & the Arts, we are here to help build the community we all want to live in.

CONNECT WITH US ON SOCIAL MEDIA

-  Facebook: @CommunityFoundationSarasotaCounty
-  Twitter: @CFSarasota
-  Instagram: @CFSarasota
-  YouTube: youtube.com/user/CFSC34237
-  LinkedIn: linkedin.com/company/2414226



2635 Fruitville Road | Sarasota, FL 34237 | 941.955.3000

cfsarasota.org