

Addition of Community Engagement Work

The Mission of the Community Foundation, to connect people who care with causes that matter, was, since our establishment in 1998, on a path to a community leadership role. Very early in our history, the Foundation worked with KNPB and area charities to establish a financial planning series for residents, created a 100% Board Giving program to increase giving, helped Found the Planned Giving Round Table, and participated in and was supportive of numerous groups and community efforts.



Early in 2012 we conducted an extensive internal and external organizational assessment. The data revealed that there is a recognition and an understanding within the community of the Foundation’s potential to address significant community problems and to empower the public.

Indeed, there is an expectation on the part of some people that the Foundation is ready and should assume that role. Already we found that the Foundation was seen and understood as a legitimate player, and indeed as a leader and a trusted resource and ally, in addressing persistent and unresolved problems.

At a board retreat later that year the board, for the first time, amended our mission to add the words “and leadership”. That small change became a tsunami of changes within the Foundation as we incorporated new responsibilities on committee and staff job descriptions. We developed a framework for community leadership, detailed plans for initiative selection, operation, and evaluation, identified expansive lists of community connectors and stakeholder. By the end of the year we selected homeless youth as our first formal initiative that would involve large-scale public convenings.

From that point things progressed rapidly, with new websites and community resources developed such as renoyouthnetwork.org and nevadamentors.org, public events like a film screening of the Homestretch film, and the Eddy House opened the Youth Resource Center downtown. We engaged our first VISTA in 2014 and by 2016 Nick had joined the staff as our first Initiatives Director. All the Foundation’s two-dozen “community leadership” activities were grouped into a new department. We continued our expansion with the launch of the Caregiver Support Initiative, and created WashoeCaregivers.org, the Washoe Caregivers Guidebook, and a toolkit for employees who are family caregivers.

IMPACT REPORT 2018

We lead and collaborate on activities that are extensive and comprehensive. In 2017, we printed our first Community Impact Report and continue to refine and expand our data collection and measurement to ensure effective programs and impact to thousands of residents. Through the formation of a new Board Committee and expansion of the VISTA volunteers, our capacity and professional abilities have increased. New involvement of more than a dozen companies through the Corporate Philanthropy Partnership has supported, and challenged, the Foundation to do more, and as a result we've expanded into low-income housing and will be working on a new initiative to help people who are victims, or potential victims, of financial abuse.

We're developing new resources, thanks to a generous community, such as the Community Endowment Fund, and will continue our expansion into more effective giving by leveraging partnerships, becoming engaged in advocacy, and strengthening area charities through new programs such as the Nonprofit Academy for new executive directors. We see all of this as more than leadership... indeed, it is community engagement, and we are very glad to be of service.

Christopher P. Askin
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FOUNDATION**
of Western Nevada

Connecting people who care with causes that matter.

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