

July 9, 2009

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Dear friends and neighbors,

I take the liberty of writing you in order to provide you with an update on our activities, and things we are doing to improve the quality of life for the residents of Williamson County. Because of your help, support, your giving and your volunteerism, we continue to make a difference, and for this, I thank you. Because of your care, and your investment, in our work I want to update you on some of the things we are doing to continue to make Williamson County a healthy, vital community, because you help make all of this happen.

Grantmaking. In the first half of 2009, our donor-advised and discretionary grantmaking exceeded \$150,000. We anticipate that our grantmaking for the year will exceed \$300,000. This is an unprecedented amount of grantmaking activity for your community foundation, and we are honored to support many important causes that improve the quality of life for so many residents of our county.

Technical Assistance. In the first half of 2009, we provided technical assistance to more than 40% to our county's nonprofit organizations. In addition to this, we provided free conference and meeting room space, or other facility space, to 20% of our community's organizations. Our nonprofit resource library should also be up and running by the end of the summer!

Funds of the Community Foundation. Funds of the foundation now exceed fifty-five, established by individuals and organizations to benefit our community now and for future generations.

Friends of the Community Foundation. Our Friends group is doing site visits to area nonprofits and learning how nonprofits are seminal to a healthy, vital community. It's a group of people—you can join us!—who want an interesting, social learning opportunity, and to find out more about the nonprofits that serve our county. Our recent site visit was to Lone Star Circle of Care, which is doing phenomenal work to support the health needs of many of our county's residents.

Backpack Program. The Backpack Program is a partnership with the Georgetown Ministerial Alliance, and we launched a pilot program in late spring. The Backpack Program is designed to meet the needs of chronically hungry children on the weekends, because there are children among us that rely on important federal programs such as free or reduced-cost breakfast and lunch during the school year.

How it works:

- * backpacks are filled with food that children take home on weekends.
- * food is child-friendly, nonperishable, easily consumed and vitamin fortified.
- * backpacks are discreetly distributed to children on the last day before the weekend (or vacation).

We hope to expand this program to more schools in Georgetown, and Leander, this fall. Reach out to us if you want to help!

Workplace Giving. When employees want to give collectively and collaboratively to make a difference and help their community grow stronger, they can give together in order to have significant impact. Our workplace giving program empowers and inspires your employees by establishing a pooled giving fund that stays 100% local and is given to organizations or causes they choose. Employees can choose any number of nonprofits or fields of interest for their giving. We are happy to counsel employees or employers to help them identify the right organization or field of interest for them.

Aging Initiative. We have also launched an Aging Initiative. This Aging Initiative is a long-term, broad-based, community-wide initiative focused on seniors. We seek to strengthen Georgetown's effectiveness in addressing current and future issues related to a population that is aging in place. While we seek to identify opportunities to improve the quality of life for our aging populations, we also believe that older community members represent a significant resource whose wisdom and experience can be leveraged to address community needs. Our Aging Initiative will mesh these two goals, and we will keep you updated on our progress.

Seeds of Strength Giving Circle. The mission of the Seeds of Strength giving circle is to provide a social experience for women, through which members will learn about the needs and assets of the community and will provide financial support to specific Georgetown area organizations, as selected by the membership. The Seeds of Strength giving circle offers members the opportunity to learn, grow, engage in collaborative decision making, giving each donor an equal voice in the decision making process. The giving circle's goal is to give \$100,000 in grants, in May 2010.

Workshops for Nonprofits. In May, we partnered with Bacon Lee & Associates and the Georgetown Public Library to offer a full day of focused training. 100 nonprofit professionals and volunteers joined us for this information-packed day.

Future Trails 2009. On November 5, 2009, we will welcome Dick Rathgeber for our third Future Trails conversation on how giving makes a place better for everyone. Dick Rathgeber has applied principles of entrepreneurship, honed over fifty years in business, to numerous good causes. Mr. Rathgeber has figured out how to give to charity with the big guys, and he believes others can do the same. "The trick is to take whatever your talents are and use them for charity," he says.

The reason Mr. Rathgeber steps up is that he knows the whole structure of nonprofit organizations rely on community leaders like you, who give through volunteership as well as financial support. Mr. Rathgeber takes it as a given that we want to share our wealth with others, and he has many ideas on large and small steps to significance through giving. He will discuss his life and work, which is also highlighted in his book, *Deal-Making For Good: Smart Giving = Significant Living*, the royalties of which support the Austin Children's Shelter. We hope you will save the date for this important event for our community!

For more frequent updates, please join our e-newsletter, or the Williamson County Nonprofits Listserv, through our website at www.chisholm-trail.org. You'll also find late-breaking details there about the Backpack Program and other ways we are working to make sure that you know that Williamson County does matter! We can all make a positive difference, now and for ever.

Thank you for all you do to help us and other nonprofit organizations serve our community.

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