

# Community Voices, Community Connections

## Don't Let the Fear of "No" Get in the Way of Giving



When Jan Jacobs led fundraising efforts for the Seattle-based international health innovation nonprofit, PATH, a high-tech sticker helped engage donors with the organization's mission. Donors were invited to tour the facilities where a PATH product designer, who Jan compared to Bill Nye the Science Guy, "with his apron and ear protectors slung around his

neck", demonstrated how a heat-sensitive sticker, no bigger than a dime, let health workers in Africa know if vials of polio vaccine had been damaged by heat exposure.

The small sticker, called a Vaccine Vial monitor, saved millions of doses of the vaccine from being discarded unnecessarily. For donors, seeing a specific example of the complex health work being done by PATH helped them understand the real-world impact their giving achieved.

Jan Jacobs spent more than 3 decades raising money for nonprofits, including the Seattle Symphony and the Make-a-Wish Alaska and Washington. She saw how nonprofit fundraisers frequently hesitated to reach out to their donors, worried about being told "no". Her biggest lesson learned from legendary fundraiser G.T. "Buck" Smith was, "never withhold an invitation for fear it will be rejected. Invite people to engage."

Now, Jan supports donors in their philanthropy as Vice President, Philanthropic Client Manager, with U.S. Trust, Bank of America Private Wealth Management. The most recent U.S. Trust High Net Worth Philanthropy study showed donors' number one question was, "Where should I give? Help me identify charities to give to so that it has impact." But, Jan has seen the fear of "no" keep donors from reaching out to nonprofits to learn more.

Although donors care about making an impact, Jan recognized that some can hesitate to ask nonprofits for more information because, "they don't want to be put in a situation where they

have to say, 'no'." Jan helps donors overcome uncertainties, encouraging them to talk directly to charities they care about, "never be afraid to engage with a charity for fear you will be over solicited. Donors should ask questions. The work is very interesting, and people would gain so much from that experience and could better focus and direct their giving."

Jan recommends a few other practices to donors looking to make an impact with their giving:

- + Think about multi-year commitments
- + Give consistently year-over-year to charities
- + Put a philanthropy strategy in place
- + Go on site visits to organizations

According to Jan, "if people want to have an impact, they need to take the time to think about what they care about and then to commit to those causes and issues. I know from my own giving that when you do, you feel so much more confident. And you won't feel over solicited because it gives you permission to confidently say no to causes that are outside your area of focus."

Not every nonprofit organization offers high-tech science demonstrations like PATH, but Jan assures donors that nonprofits are all eager to share their work, "and if it's something you care about naturally, you're going to be amazed at the stories you hear and the things you learn. You'll love it."

You can learn more about national trends in donor giving from these two recent studies:

- + 2018 U.S. Trust Study of High Net Worth Philanthropy
- + Institute for Policy Studies Report: Gilded Giving 2018

**In 2018, Greater Tacoma Community Foundation fundholders granted more than \$4.7 million to the community. Community resources and grants directed by GTCF totaled \$4.0 million. GTCF issued a total of 1,168 grants to 480 grantees.**



## Endowment Funds at GTCF Help L'Arche for the Long-Term

L'ArcheTahoma Hope is a familiar sight at local farmers markets, offering flower baskets, plants, and vegetables. That produce is grown on six acres in rural Pierce County by members of the L'Arche community, people with and without developmental disabilities.

Although the market booths are the most visible part of L'Arche's work, the 43-year old organization also supports and enriches the lives of its community through a residential program and a new 7,800 square foot welcome center that Executive Director Laura Giddings says invites, "people who are living at home with an adult with an intellectual disability to come and be part of our family. They don't have to move in, they can just come and enjoy community and make those connections with each other."

Raising funds to provide care and community every day of the year is a big job. For L'Arche, endowed funds are part of the organization's sustainability plan. L'Arche has two

endowment funds at GTCF. The James Henriot Endowment for L'ArcheTahoma Hope Fund honors the late Eisenhower Carlson attorney. The Father James Boyle Endowment Fund for L'ArcheTahoma Hope honors the Rainier School chaplain who was central to the founding of L'Arche.

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Laura Giddings remembers Father Boyle's "listening ear" was the reason why they could stay and work through the challenges of caring for people with disabilities and building relationships and learning all your own vulnerabilities in that process. I think he was all about

human connection, and all about people with intellectual disabilities having those kinds of normal human relationships that we all enjoy.”

Laura Giddings has seen, “many organizations with 40-year histories that are struggling and going out of business. With the lives of people that we are responsible for 24/7, having some place that money comes from that it just comes, is huge. It’s something donors committed to our future that we can count on, and that’s just pretty rare in the fundraising world.”

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L’Arche Development Director Jonathon Ross worked at L’Arche through AmeriCorps before his current role. He sees a connection between the seasons of work at the farm and the work of building an endowment, “We would wake up every cold, wet, winter morning and we would just sit with the difficulty of going out into the world. Imagine having a job that requires presence in the elements, and that requires you to be active with other people on the farm, and then also having a disability that blocks you from accomplishing those things as easily as others would. If you drove up today, before Spring, the farm might not have those colorful flowers of summer baskets at the farmer’s market. But the work that comes before those blooms is really similar to what we talk about with these endowments. They are the hard work, the fruits of a lifetime, that will eventually help us come to that spring.”

In February, Greater Tacoma Community Foundation distributed \$1.3 million in annual grants to 120 organizations, including L’Arche Tahoma Hope. Endowed funds at GTCF, established by individuals, families, and agencies, yield these annual grants based on earnings of charitable contributions that are invested as part of GTCF’s pooled endowment.

To learn more about how endowments can provide long-term, sustainable financial support for the organizations

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*To learn more about how endowments can provide long-term, sustainable financial support for the organizations and causes you care about, contact GTCF’s philanthropy department.*

# GTCF Spark Grant Recipient Tackling 'Period Poverty' at Local Schools

Sharon Chambers-Gordon was first exposed to the issue of "Period Poverty" through her own daughter's experience. "She was in Middle School when it happened for the first time, and she didn't have any supplies with her." Luckily the school nurse had a few sanitary napkins, but the nurse told Sharon it wasn't something that the school always kept stocked, "People drop items off from time to time, but it's not something they always have on hand."

Sharon started the Raising Girls project to provide feminine care products to local girls. In 2018 they donated 200 care packages to girls in foster care and the Juvenile Justice program. An additional 50 bags went to the Boys & Girls Club at the Eastside Community Center and those quickly ran out, emphasizing the high demand for this kind of support. This past Winter, Sharon was one of 6 GTCF Spark Grant Recipients, receiving a micro-grant

to provide more of these hygiene care packages at the Eastside Community Center.

In addition to the Boys & Girls Club, Sharon has also partnered with Tacoma Public Schools. Rosemarie Burke, principal at First Creek Middle School, sees how Period Poverty can be a barrier for her female students, "Talking to my girls here and at other schools I've worked at I know it really is a need. Girls are going without and they are either missing school or just using toilet paper or whatever limited products we might have in the nurse's office. It impacts attendance, it impacts grades, and it impacts the overall healthy lifestyle for young women here in our community and it would just be great that it wasn't an issue."

Earlier this month, Raising Girls assembled 550 care packs which

they will soon deliver to 11 Tacoma Public Schools campuses (6 middle schools and 5 high schools). They are also developing plans for workshops, presentations, and print materials for students, teachers, and parents so that everyone knows about the resources available and how to help when the need arises.

Raising Girls is currently hosting a One Bag Drive where community members can grab a bag from locations around Tacoma and fill it with items from an attached list. All of the bags from the drive will be donated to the Eastside Community Center.

As Sharon began to ask more questions and talk with other families and school administrators, she learned that period poverty, the inability to afford feminine hygiene products, affects many young women here in Pierce County. "When you're making just enough to get by, hygiene items and other products like lotion and body wash are often way down on the list," Sharon explained. "And, Washington is currently one of 37 states with a "pink tax" where feminine care products are taxed like luxury items, so that increases the cost as well."





## KBTC Uses Marbles, Paint, and Dr. Seuss to Make After-School Science Fun

On a recent afternoon at Jennie Reed Elementary School, first-grader Sadie'Sade was one of about a dozen students using a tray filled with paint and marbles to try to create a picture. As she rocked the tray back and forth she said, "I like it because it's fun!" But the activity was more than just fun, it was designed to teach kids about inquiry and problem solving.

Sadie'Sade is a part of KBTC Kids STEM. It's an after-school science program offered by the local PBS affiliate at four Tacoma elementary schools and two Tacoma Housing Authority sites. KBTC Kids STEM utilizes PBS Kids curriculum and video resources to teach students about approaching problems like a scientist.

"It's a different way of doing it", says Alyssa Torrez, KBTC Community Engagement Manager, "because we're not writing terms on the board or explicitly saying 'now you're in this step'. The learning is happening organically through play and experimentation. The kids get really excited because they know the characters from TV too, so that makes the bridge to learning a little easier as well."

Before Sadie'Sade and her fellow students got the paint and marbles, they watched a video that featured Dr. Seuss

singing a song called "Accidents Happen, If You're Lucky". As a group they discussed what they saw in the video and how accidents can help us learn new things.

Once Sadie'Sade and her classmates were given the chance to experiment painting with the marbles, they quickly recognized the marbles were hard to control. As a result, they came up with new strategies to better manage the marbles and make the paintings look the way they wanted.

"This lesson about learning from our accidents and trying new approaches is important in science, but also in life and relationships" said Honey Batth, KBTC STEM Teacher. While Sadie'Sade is having fun, she's also getting that lesson. At one point when the group circled up for a reflection, Sadie'Sade told Ms. Honey, "You inspire me... because you teach us about science."

KBTC is one of 24 organizations currently offering Expanded Learning Opportunities through the Tacoma Whole Child partnership. Students at 12 Elementary Schools in Tacoma now have access to Expanded Learning Opportunities like KBTC Kids STEM through this community-wide effort to ensure every child is healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged.

Greater Tacoma Community Foundation, Tacoma Public Schools, and numerous community partners are working together to expand this partnership by providing aligned, equitable, high quality social, emotional, and academic development opportunities to students in and out of school.

## Sparking Change Starts With Seeing the Need

Seventeen year-old Caleb Kamalu was volunteering at F.U.N Food Bank in his hometown of University Place when he noticed food bank staff struggling to explain something to a customer. The woman had filled up her cart with more than the allotted amount of items, and a staff member was trying to explain that she needed to put some back. Caleb recognized it was a hard thing to tell someone, "It's always a delicate balance because you know they need the food, but we have to make sure there is enough for everyone else as well."

What made the interaction even more challenging was that the woman didn't speak English. She spoke Russian. The staff member didn't speak Russian. Caleb watched as the woman, "started trying to move her cart away and it was clear she was really upset. It was just one of those fight or flight situations and that's just not what anyone wants."

Caleb has seen communication issues like this happen all the time. He's even been in the middle of them himself, "It really is a big barrier to being able to help people out or explain what's available to them, and I just thought...this is something that can be fixed."

Caleb is one of seven individuals recently selected as a GTCF Spark Grant recipient. Spark Grants are micro-grants, up to \$1,500, designed to bring people-powered ideas to life in Pierce County, sparking positive social and neighborhood change through the efforts of grass-roots leadership. Each of the most recent Spark grantees have taken the initiative to



meet a need they've seen in the community.

Caleb's plan for sparking change at local food banks is to create a multi-language "phrase book" that incorporates numerous translations of common terms or phrases that food bank staff and volunteers would need to use while helping food bank shoppers. The idea is to make the phrase book available as a free resource for food banks everywhere.

When it comes to sparking community change, Caleb says it just starts with recognizing the needs in front of you, "If you're struggling with a problem, there are likely others who have struggled with that same problem. So, if you take the initiative to try to solve it, not only will you help others, but those same people who've had that problem will often help you fix it; and there are lots of other people who will be willing to get involved as well."

### *Upcoming Fundraisers*

**April 25,** 25th Annual Dining Out for Life - Pierce County AIDS Foundation  
**April 28,** Boombaballa - Catherine's Place

**April 30,** Toast to Our 25th Year! - Hilltop Artists

**May 1,** Mentorship Matters Annual Breakfast - YMCA of Pierce and Kitsap Counties

**May 2,** Circle of Hope Breakfast - REACH Ministries

**May 2,** The Barn Raiser - PCC Farmland Trust

**May 2,** G.I.R.L. Luncheon - Girl Scouts of Western Washington

**May 2,** Sip, Sample, Savor: A 'Just Like You Event' - Centerforce

**May 3,** Breakfast Fundraiser - Neighborhood Clinic

**May 4,** STAR WARS Charity Dinner & Auction - A Step Ahead Pierce County

**May 4,** Hunger Walk & 5K Run - Emergency Food Network

**May 4,** Let's Face It Walk - Sexual Assault Center of Pierce County

**May 4,** 30th Anniversary Gala - Safe Streets

**May 4,** 2019 Annual Dinner & Auction - Chinese Reconciliation Park Foundation

**May 9,** Franke's Follies Luncheon - Franke Tobey Jones

**May 14,** Rise & Shine Breakfast - Hope Sparks

**May 18,** 11th Annual Dinner Auction - Shared Housing Services

**May 21,** Empowering Youth Tacoma - College Success Foundation

**May 31,** 5th Annual Dinner & Auction - Nourish Pierce County

**June 28,** 2nd Annual Golf Tournament - Safe Streets

**June 29,** Dog-A-Thon 2019 - The Humane Society for Tacoma & Pierce County