



IGNITING THE SPARK: Examples of Next Gen Engagement Strategies

Prepared by the National Center for Family Philanthropy & Youth Philanthropy Connect, a program of The Frieda C. Fox Family Foundation

TRACY FAMILY FOUNDATION

LOCATED: Mt. Sterling, Illinois, with family geographically dispersed

WEBSITE: www.tracyfoundation.org

MISSION STATEMENT: To provide resources to organizations that foster the values of Robert and Dorothy Tracy—a Catholic/Christian belief, honesty, integrity, fairness, and a strong work ethic. The Foundation seeks to proactively strengthen Brown County in Illinois and the surrounding Region by investing in the education, youth, families, and capacity of these communities. The Foundation is also a vehicle for developing a philanthropic spirit among Tracy family members.

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Tracy Family Foundation

Who Is Involved:

- 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th generation family members
- 59 members of the 3rd generation are actively involved on boards, committees, and grant programs
- Supported by a family member in the role of Program Associate

History of Youth Engagement:

Founded in 1997, the Tracy Family Foundation has acted to develop the philanthropic spirit of the next generation, as it is the driving force for their mission. To do so, the foundation created a formal structure, and in 1998 began a matching grant program, which engaged the family's youth over age 21. Two years later, the foundation turned its attention to those children between ages 5 and 21, creating the next gen grant program, youth to go on site visits and request grants of \$500 to \$1,000. The family's youngsters met at the family's annual reunion in the Ozarks, and worked together to develop the philanthropic spirit of the next generation and to share their nonprofit experiences in their home communities.

In 2006, the board allocated two board of directors seats to youth ages 16 and over, and added a third seat the following year. In 2010, the Board of Trustees began work to develop a Next Gen Advisory Board, which in 2012 began reviewing



grants of up to \$5,000. To support these efforts properly, the family hired a Program Associate in 2013, who is also a family member. Today eight members of the next generation serve on the Advisory Board and three members serve on the foundation's board.

Current Youth Engagement Strategies:

- 3:1 Matching Grant Program (ages 16+)
- Next Gen Grant Program (ages 5-30) allocates \$1,000 for ages 5-17; \$2,000 for 18-30, with spouses included. The average participation rate among eligible family members over the last four years had been 80 percent.
- Volunteer Incentive \$500 - \$1000 offered to match a individual volunteer efforts of 10+ hours at a nonprofit.
- Annual family reunion includes next generation philanthropy to encourage the spirit and leadership of family. Everyone shares their next gen grant and why they gave to the organization, with a vote held for "top nonprofit" and additional \$1,000 award. The reunion offers formal education and great bonding time!



- Three designated board seats for next gen members (age 16+), two with 1 year terms and one with a 3 year term.
- Committees— In 2015, 10 next gen members serve on nine different committees supporting various board initiatives.
- Next Gen Advisory Board meets quarterly to review grants up to \$5,000. This strategy gives the next generation a voice, accountability, and an opportunity to obtain leadership and foundation experience.



- Annual survey gauges interest, ensures next gen feedback, and ensures their voices are heard.



Adult Perspective:

"I am humbled, grateful, and in awe of the engagement and dedication to the Tracy Family Foundation put forth by the members of the 3rd generation. They are amazing and talented and are stepping up to carry on the legacy of their grandparents, Robert and Dorothy Tracy. Go, 3Gs!"

—Jean Buckley, TFF President

"I love witnessing the kids being so willing to participate and take on responsibilities. Even though they are busy young adults, they volunteer their time and individual talents. It is rewarding to know they respect the work being done and the value in learning from each other."

—Linda Tracy, Program Associate

Next Gen Perspectives:

"I started giving grants at an early age and have found a true passion in philanthropy over the past several years. Grandpa and Grandma Tracy instilled a set of traditions and values in all of us. One of my goals is to help carry on these traditions among the next generations and continue the legacy of the Tracy Family Foundation (TFF). I was fortunate to serve a one-year term on the TFF board in 2007. In addition, I've served on our Next Gen Advisory Board for the past four years, three of which I've been chair. The experiences and relationships we have built together as a family is something very special and that I don't take for granted.

"I recall going on multiple site visits in the community and surrounding area as a young child. At the time I did not fully understand why I had to participate nor did I understand the importance what we were trying to achieve as a family. Little did I know at the time, participating in philanthropy through volunteer projects and site visits, would later help pave the way for my career, me and make me who I am today. My philanthropic passion stems from family values that Grandpa and Grandma Tracy instilled in us through living by example."



—Megan Costigan, NGAB Chair



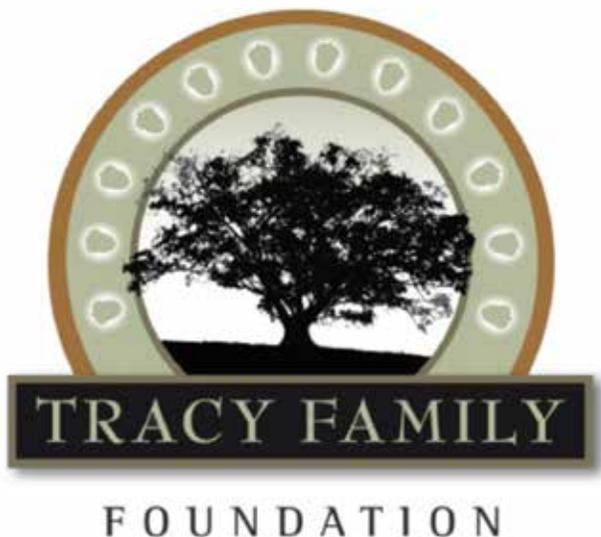
Next Gen Perspectives Continued:

“I grew up watching my parents and grandparents give their time, money and gifts. They instilled a philanthropic spirit in me that has continued into my adult life. I’ve served on committees, boards for foundations and organizations, and I have also worked in the non-profit sector. The Foundation gives my cousins and I an opportunity to thoughtfully give back, and it is a constant reminder that you are never too young to make the world a better place.”

—Christine Iovaldi, NGAB Vice-Chair

Advice to Others:

1. Provide various age-appropriate opportunities for involvement and responsibility so everyone can help and engage!
2. Start small. Take time to figure out what works for you and your family, and focus on one activity at a time, building as appetites for projects grow.
3. Get in and do it! Start young if possible, but it is also never too late.
4. Notice the passions of your younger family members and tap into each of their talents at whatever level they are able to give. Every family needs every member, as there is always plenty of work to go around.
5. For youth—jump on in! Listen. Get involved as much as you can now, and you will learn over time.



Resources to Share:

- 3rd generation board service policy
- Next Generation Advisory Board principles
- Matching grant policy