5 Ways to Achieve Success in Next Generation Engagement

Donor-advised funds provide a tax-advantaged way for your clients to simplify their giving and achieve greater impact in their communities. But how can your client set up members of the next generation of their family to keep that positive momentum?

Share these five tips with your clients so they can set up their families for multi-generational success in giving with their donor-advised fund:

• **Start by sharing your story.** You may not think that your kids and grandkids are interested in hearing your life story (e.g., about how you had to walk to school in snow uphill both ways), but you may be surprised. Storytelling resonates and is part of the way our species has passed on history and values for millennia. For some, this may come naturally, but for others knowing where to start may be a stumbling block. The Community Foundation can help by meeting with donors to document their stories in a format that can be shared. This is usually an hour-long conversation in an interview format that gets to the heart of a client’s values and experiences, especially those relating to their charitable giving and civic engagement. We use this interview to create a summary document to guide future charitable decisions. This is a great document to share with family and to begin the process of embedding storytelling into a family’s culture.

• **Talk about your giving.** Your donor-advised fund may not be a topic best suited for precious moments at holiday gatherings, but it is important for you to find a way to let your family know how you used your donor-advised fund each year. Maybe you could simply send an email or letter. When you do talk about your giving for the year, explain how you made contributions to your fund, why you chose certain assets for gifting to your fund, and why you suggested the grants to the different organizations you support. The reasons for using a highly appreciated stock as your gift to your fund as opposed to cash or giving more than normal for income tax reasons may not be intuitive to family members. Also, they may not know that you care for a particular cause or that a particular charity was undertaking a project that you support.

• **Volunteer together.** A great way to connect your family members with the organizations you care about is to include them in events or other volunteering opportunities. This gives you an opportunity to spend time together, have fun, and feel good about helping others. Some families also take donations (sometimes in lieu of presents) and then by vote or by random drawing select a charity to receive the collection. This can be very fulfilling and connect the family together with an important cause.

• **Give your family the ability to suggest grants.** By giving your kids or grandkids a dollar amount that they can recommend as grants from your fund, you empower them to make
Contact Us
Our development team is available to assist you with the information and tools that help your clients achieve their charitable goals.

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decisions about the organizations they care about while providing an opportunity for you to talk with them about their choices. You can determine the dollar amount that you share based on age or other factors. While you never actually give up your role as advisor to the fund, you do include your family in a way that can build over time.

• Let your successor advisors know their role. You may have already made arrangements to have family members become the donor advisor when you are gone by naming them as a ‘successor advisor’. Taking on this important role is done most successfully when you tell the designated family members about the plan in advance and they have a chance to ask questions and hear about your expectations for them. Regardless of how engaged they are with your giving now, the generation of family members will appreciate knowing your planned role for them in advance. There are a broad range of options available to you for setting up the rules on fund succession, so the conversation with family members may go beyond simply letting them know that they will ultimately inherit the fund’s advisory role.

If you have questions or would like to discuss a specific situation, please feel free to contact Tom Griffith, Gift Planning Officer, at 315-883-5544 or tgriffith@cnycf.org.