

Big Ideas

TRENDS AND INNOVATION
IN PHILANTHROPY

Circle of Influence

Donor circles pool resources and thinking

When people share a passion and work together to achieve a vision, great things are not just possible, they're probable. That's the idea behind Silicon Valley Community Foundation's donor circles, where people collaborate around specific causes.

For example, the Donor Circle for the Environment focuses on conservation of open space and habitat, climate change, and environmental education.

"The donor circle has been incredible in helping me through my personal journey of understanding how to give — how to think about not just giving to an organization but identifying a specific program and seeing it flourish," says member and circle leader Sally Liu, an environmental engineer who currently volunteers for The Nature Conservancy.

The circle makes about five grants each year, focusing on the Bay Area, particularly in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties, but also considering state-wide causes. "We fund organizations at key inflection points where our demonstration of support can help them secure other funding and move faster to the finish line on a project," says Ash McNeely, a circle member and the executive director of Sand Hill Foundation.

The circle, which meets once a month, brings in experts to speak about local, regional and national issues. Members also take field trips to see projects up close and ask questions of program representatives. "To hear the conviction in their voice and understand the nuances of what they're doing really makes a difference," Liu says.

McNeely emphasizes the impact of collaborative thinking. "Every donor at the community foundation is a hub of knowledge and connections," she says, "and when we come together with one another and the [SVCF] staff in a donor circle, our collective information exchange and learning is really powerful." — *Tom Weede*



Oakland's Firebrand Artisan Breads supports 50 jobs, thanks in part to the efforts of ICA Fund Good Jobs.

Capital with a Catch

Investors in Fund Good Jobs are doing just that

by the
numbers

100%

PLUS

Increase in Firebrand's workforce thanks to charitable investment

Woody Shackleton has done a lot of investing in his life, and he's long been philanthropically active. But social impact investing was new to him until he became one of the first investors in ICA Fund Good Jobs.

ICA Fund Good Jobs provides initial capital for small business owners in the Oakland area. In turn, the owners agree to pay more than the local living wage; provide medical, dental and retirement benefits; and create professional opportunities for employees.

The organization is an evolution of Inner City Advisors, which for 20 years provided structured education, mentorship and advising to Bay Area small businesses. About two years ago, ICA leaders realized that the businesses they were working with often lacked growth capital, typically between \$250,000 and \$2 million.

"At that level, even for community banks, it's a heavier lift and more of a risk," says Sean Daniel Murphy, CEO of ICA Fund Good Jobs. "And it's below your traditional private equity venture capital return profile. But they are still great business." So Fund Good Jobs was formed to help ICA-vetted businesses raise the capital they need to become local economic engines.

Shackleton, a retired technology executive who lives in Atherton, was familiar with ICA and the above-the-norm support

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4 ▶

Big Ideas

► CAPITAL WITH A CATCH CONTINUED
FROM PAGE 3

the group provides small businesses. So when Murphy approached him about investing in Fund Good Jobs, he was confident the businesses seeking funding had been put through their paces.

With SVCF's help, Shackleton used his donor advised fund to create a \$100,000 recoverable grant for Fund Good Jobs. At the time of his investment last year, the organization was helping Oakland's Firebrand Artisan Breads get its retail operation off the ground. A recoverable grant is similar to a no-interest or very-low-interest loan. When Firebrand pays back the \$100,000, the money will be reinvested in other small businesses.

"This is a cool way to put philanthropic money to work — not just to help one business grow, but hopefully to get funneled back to help other businesses grow," Shackleton says.

Fund Good Jobs also grew his initial investment. And over the course of 2015, Firebrand more than doubled its workforce. The company now employs more than 50 people, almost all full time.

"One of the huge issues in society is the gap between the haves and the have-nots," he says. "These businesses are creating good jobs, not just jobs." — *Gayle Bennett*

by the
numbers

130K

Hours TI's employees volunteered in education in 2015

Sharing STEM

Why TI spreads the love of science and math



Many of TI's philanthropic efforts focus on inspiring and educating young people in STEM.

For Silicon Valley students and teachers who have a passion for math and science — and for students whose passion is yet to be discovered — 2015 was a year to celebrate.

Partnering with SVCF, Dallas-based Texas Instruments (TI) granted nearly \$1 million to programs in Santa Clara County that improved teacher effectiveness, student achievement and engagement in STEM (science, technology, engineering and math).

Education is TI's top philanthropic objective. Through TI's "Power of STEM Education" grants, TI supports science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) programs that have a track record of improving student achievement and increasing the effectiveness and quantity of STEM teachers.

COURTESY OF TEXAS INSTRUMENTS

Empowered to Engage

SanDisk hits high marks for volunteerism

For employees at SanDisk Corporation, volunteering is not an extracurricular activity to be squeezed in on their own time. It is an integral part of their work life, something the company not only encourages, but also fully supports. As a result, 92 percent of workers participate in volunteer activities.

This high level of volunteerism didn't happen by chance. In 2013, SanDisk CEO Sanjay Mehrotra announced a corporate goal of 100 percent employee volunteer participation. At the time, the rate was 14 percent.

"I think one of the reasons [the initiative] was so successful was because it was such an audacious goal," says

Gisela Bushey, director of the SanDisk Foundation and of Community Relations. "It was going to require everybody's participation and consideration to pull this off. And it was truly a sight to see to watch this become a reality."

Below are a few ways the company boosted engagement:

1. LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Leadership didn't just embrace the concept in the abstract; they also served as role models. "All of our executive leaders participate," says Kelly Petrich, a former community relations manager at SanDisk. "They roll up their sleeves and they volunteer, and they do it alongside employees."

2. OFFER A SUPPORT STRUCTURE

SanDisk established the infrastructure to support the volunteer efforts of its large international workforce, including