A LETTER FROM ALLISON FASY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

WOW! 10 years. They have flown by, and oh how we have grown! What started as a series of dinner conversations has grown into a strong, systematic, and effective family foundation that has gained credibility in our city, transformed entire communities, and changed lives one by one. But, in my mind, we are just getting started.

As we dream together and plan for the future, I am compelled to first reflect on the past. It is in the past that we identify the spirit of the Foundation, a spirit that has remained consistent from our infancy to present day – a spirit of learning, listening, challenging, and collaborating towards a thriving community. This heart is the life-blood of the Foundation and the pulse that propels us forward. It is what drives the momentum of the Board and staff to remain deeply committed to solving some of our city’s greatest issues instead of settling for the status quo.

In the beginning, we learned the rules and the regulations around creating a Foundation. We learned the passions of each family member and the existing needs of our community. The challenging and exciting part, however, is that the learning never has and never should stop. Learning is the essence of effective philanthropy as our city and its needs constantly change. New leaders are elected with different priorities and visions. New businesses and development attract growth, forming new neighborhood cultures. Bridges, roads, highways are torn down and rebuilt, creating and/or preventing access to a higher quality of life.

As a Foundation, we continue to be faithfully dedicated to changing lives, to eliminating barriers for the most vulnerable in our community, and improving the quality of life for North Texas residents in need. That mission grounds us in the wake of change while allowing us to progress how we address needs and affect change. Here lies the growth.

Over the years, we have moved beyond merely transactional grant-making to thoughtful community awareness and developing innovative solutions to systemic problems. We are diving into the root causes of homelessness, abuse, illiteracy, and generational poverty to more clearly understand how to make a difference and move the needle for our city. Sometimes that difference takes the shape of changing one life, like an elderly gentleman who spent the remainder of his life well-cared for at St. Joseph’s Residence instead of at The Bridge homeless shelter. While other times our difference affects the outlook of an entire community, as we have seen the Zero to Five Funders Collaborative achieve in the Bachman Lake community. Both exude our heart, both make an impact. The difference is scale. It is moving away from isolated and individualistic philanthropy and into a collective action between funders, non-profits, and the public sector to create a stronger, more connected community.

As I think ahead, I challenge us to thoughtfully lead, to continue to ask the difficult questions, to embrace risk and failure in an effort to achieve the improbable. How can systems be improved to help those we serve? Where are we not seeing improvement and why? How can we convene partners effectively to encourage collaboration to loftier goals?

It has been my honor to grow alongside you and I look forward to the opportunities that lie ahead. May the work we do continue to eliminate barriers for the most vulnerable, to remove obstacles for those we serve, and to reinvent our community by changing one life or one community at a time.

Allison Fasy
Executive Director