

Community Matters

Doing Good in Your Community



The Guilford Foundation is at the root of so many wonderful initiatives that generous, community-minded individuals and organizations in Guilford have spearheaded to assist those in need.

Ever Changing

The Guilford Foundation's (TGF) Board is vital in enabling stability during ever-changing times. Peter Barrett, who recently completed his term as Board Chair, was at the helm for three years. Linda Weber took on the post this July. It seems a good time to look at how TGF has evolved and what the future may hold.

Challenges

Challenges abound, and TGF has met them. "A pleasant challenge has been the growth in the amount of funds we have received by way of contribution and market growth," reflects Barrett. That has increased the amount of grantmaking TGF has been able to make. The fund growth also caused the need to "tap very committed and knowledgeable people on our board to serve as treasurer and finance committee members," explains Barrett. This has been instrumental in ensuring that all board members are well-informed from a financial perspective, including the development of a user-friendly financial dashboard and staying engaged with TGF's financial managers.

Meeting Needs

Among many rewarding moments as Board Chair, Barrett calls the success of TGF's Covid Relief Fund perhaps the most satisfying. TGF established the fund almost immediately after the onset of the pandemic to accept immediate donations and meet the immediate, severe need. "The fund met a need that was not being addressed, and couldn't be addressed, by any other organization in the earliest stages of the pandemic," notes Barrett.



Pictured are former TGF Board Chair Peter Barrett, TGF Executive Director Liza Petra and current TGF Board Chair, Linda Weber.

Photo credit: Jennifer Mullett.

"The community rallying around the fund was gratifying."

How Funds are Spent

The Covid Relief Fund demonstrated how TGF could quickly accelerate and expand its work in the face of sudden and overwhelming need. "This type of fund was not what our foundation had previously used in serving our community," underscores Barrett. "As a board we had to act quickly and carefully to make sure we took the proper procedural actions . . . to remain compliant with our charter and bylaws."

Maintain Momentum

Weber is eager to maintain that momentum by ensuring TGF not only reacts to needs but is also proactive in its efforts. "We will be building on the community's commitment to giving by lifting up the issues and needs of our community and looking for solutions together," she relates. "We also learned that the pandemic changed the landscape of need in our community - the need for mental health

resources for adolescents and teens has become more pronounced as well as financial support for early childhood care and basic daily living needs. We'll prioritize these in our grant making activities as well as continue

our support of the work of the many not-for-profits who enhance the quality of life in our community."

Strategic Plan

The Board recently adopted a strategic plan that calls for TGF to step more firmly into its role as a leader in the community. To Weber, that means convening community leaders on a regular basis to build relationships, to identify issues and seek opportunities for partnership. "It also means encouraging diverse groups to come together to build community and share knowledge and looking for ways to advance justice, inclusiveness and equity," she adds. Weber is looking to "identify gaps in services and find partners to help fill the gaps."

Community Trust

For both Barrett and Weber, serving as Board Chair is humbling by witnessing the community's response to need as well as gratifying in the trust the community has placed in TGF.



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