

Reflections

By Sarah Hopper, Sound Philanthropy

December, 2014

Dear Friends,

The other day my son, Nicolas, came to me with his ideas for the Share money that he has set aside. Nicolas divides his allowance into *Spend*, *Save* and *Share*, and every year around the holidays, he makes a donation. In years past, I have presented ideas to him and we have decided together where the gift will go. Once he bought food for the local food bank; last year he purchased toys for kids at Seattle Children's. This year, however, he came to me with a plan: he decided to split the donation between the West Sound Wildlife Shelter and the Bainbridge Community Foundation. Eight years old and he no longer needs a philanthropic advisor! I couldn't be prouder.

Last month, a long-time favorite client accomplished something really great. I have been working with the third-generation of a local philanthropic family (ages 10-35) for over three years, and this year they chose the focus area of secondary education for girls in Guatemala (where the dropout rate can exceed 78% before completing primary school) for their grants. Global giving was new territory for them, and for the family foundation. This group of courageous young people transformed their thinking and discovered a new level of sophistication as grantmakers. They stepped out of their comfort zone, worked hard to learn about the issues, participated in "Skype site visits" and found wonderful success in their decision-making process. Their leadership and initiative has inspired the Board of the family foundation to embark on a global giving cycle in 2015. In the words of a second-generation family member: "Well done guys! We're all very proud of the work that you've done; the due diligence and time that you've applied to this is evident. A lot of families would be envious!"

In my work with families, inspiring and empowering young philanthropists is often the best part – as a philanthropic advisor and a mother. Over the years, I have had the pleasure of working with groups of young siblings and cousins, helping to create philanthropy programs that are age-appropriate and fun, and that are designed to open their minds to a world that is bigger than the one that often tends to revolve around them. On several occasions, my work with the younger generations of families has caused the older generations to reflect on their purpose and practice at a deeper level, and our work together becomes more profound and meaningful.

As we move full swing into this time of gratitude, giving and family, take time to consider if your family, or a client's family, might benefit from a personalized giving program designed to excite and ignite the members. I would be happy to help.

I wish you and yours a very happy holiday season.

Warmest regards,

Sarah Hopper
Founder, Sound Philanthropy