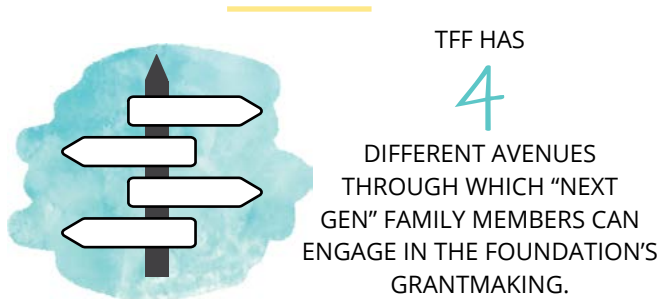




A Seat at the Table: Sharing the Responsibility and Joy

Being hands on in the community is a deeply held value of the Tracy Family Foundation (TFF). In order to equip all Tracy generations, present and future, to be generous, thoughtful, and strategic grantmakers, the foundation developed an array of opportunities for family members to participate in the foundation that are designed to meet them where they are.



Megan Costigan, Chair of the Tracy Family Foundation Next Generation Advisory Board, recalls going on multiple site visits in the community and surrounding area as a young child: "As a kid, I did not understand why I had to go on these and the importance of each one. Little did I know at the time, these site visits would help pave the way for my career and make me who I am today. My philanthropic passion stems from the family values that my Grandpa and Grandma Tracy instilled in us through living by example."

The Tracys are a large family with four generations, many of whom work together in the family's Dot Foods business and participate together in the foundation. All 12 Tracy children, including Megan's mom, intentionally prioritize and model their philanthropic values with appreciation for youth engagement. For the Tracys, community work and fun family time are one and the same; giving back to the community is a normal part of being in the family.

Each year, the family holds a reunion that serves as both a vacation and a philanthropy retreat. Service learning opportunities and connection are woven throughout, and it is also the culmination of the "next gen" program. Megan's generation—the current next gen—has 58 third-generation family members, including spouses, who range in age from seven to 37 years old. The next gen program provides discretionary money each year to family members between the ages of five and 30 in amounts that vary by age. The goal is 100% participation, with each next gen member choosing one organization to receive their grant. At the reunion, each next gen family member gives a short summary of why they chose their organization and how the money will be used. Megan shared,



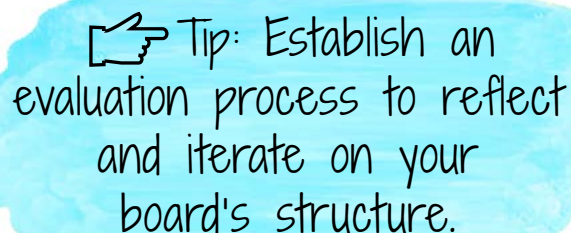
"It has been really fun to hear the stories over the years, and is a great way to learn more about our cousins and their community interests." After hearing all the speeches, the next generation family members vote on one organization to receive an additional grant from the foundation.

Founded in 2012, the Next Generation Advisory Board was created to give interested family members 16 years and older, already participating in the next gen program, a place to explore and deepen their involvement in the foundation. In 2015, the advisory board was comprised of five, third-generation members (also known as next gen) and an advisor from the second generation who helps to foster the philanthropic spirit and serves as a "middle man" to the full board. The advisory board is responsible for evaluating grant requests under \$5,000 while also cultivating an understanding of philanthropy and building leadership skills in the younger generations. The Next Generation Advisory Board offers opportunities, education, and support to fulfill the Tracy Family Foundation's vision. Their goal is to build a legacy of leadership and generosity among Tracy Family members as they engage with unity and passion in building improved, sustainable change in Brown County, the surrounding region, and in their own communities.

From its inception, this board established an evaluation process to reflect and iterate on the efficacy of the board structure every three years. While the 2015 advisory board evaluation resulted in a decision to continue for the next three years, this process allows future generations to be nimble and responsive to current realities.

The advisory board strives to recruit a mix of age, gender, family branch, and spouses to ensure a diverse board is in place each year. Currently each seat is a

one or two-year term, which is renewable when there is interest. Megan shares, "Due to higher interest, we have increased our board from five to eight next gen members for 2016. It has given me great pleasure to serve as chair of the next generation advisory board for the past three years."



Tip: Establish an evaluation process to reflect and iterate on your board's structure.

Three of the 10 foundation governing board seats are specifically designated for the next generation. In an effort to engage as many next gen family members as possible, two of the three seats are one year terms. The third seat is a three year term. To date, 22 members of the ever growing number of members of the next generation have served on the governing board. In addition, according to Megan, "All advisory board members are invited and encouraged to attend TFF's board meetings as they are a very educational and beneficial experience. Although we don't have voting power in TFF meetings as next gen advisory board members, we are still encouraged to share our opinions and ask questions. It is important for us to remember to lean in and take a seat at the table."

In addition to the next gen program, the advisory board, and governing board seats, there are other avenues for participation in the foundation's grantmaking. Family members age 16 and older can participate in the matching grant program. Individuals making personal donations can apply for a matching grant from the foundation requesting a one-to-one, two-to-one, or three-to-one match. The foundation

does not require a site visit for each organization in the matching grant program, but does require a site visit or phone interview to an organization for those participating in the next gen grant program.

One big takeaway for Megan: “The second generation has worked hard to model inclusive behavior and prioritize the importance of our family values.” The multi-tiered engagement model they have created has been crucial in the foundation’s quest to achieve 100% family participation amongst a very large, geographically dispersed family. Family members proactively encourage, support and nurture new

voices. They cultivate a grateful and philanthropic spirit among all Tracy generations present and future to ensure the family can continue to build the capacity of their communities through investment in education, youth, and families. Of course this is all a bit easier when the family enjoys each other and the foundation work. Megan shared, “My family members are my co-workers and my best friends. My grandparents, the foundation’s namesakes, always stress that family is the most important thing whether you are working or playing. Their legacy helps us focus on maintaining our family’s friendship and the working bond that we all have.”



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This case study was written by Lauren Hasey Maher and developed for Foundation Center’s Youth Giving project. Photo provided courtesy of the Tracy Family Foundation. Visit youthgiving.org to view other free resources related to engaging young people in grantmaking.
