

Background

Greenville Partnership for Philanthropy was established in 2014 with the mission of maximizing the impact of philanthropy on our community by connecting grantmakers of diverse backgrounds and experience to share and increase knowledge, improve practice, and pursue opportunities for positive change—together. During the five years since the first meeting, we worked to fulfill this mission in three ways. Regular networking activities to help funders get to know each other and to build trust among them and with other key stakeholders in the community. Through bimonthly membership meetings and special events, we promoted education on grantmaking practice and community topics. And we supported and facilitated collaboration between grantmakers and other partners to develop a funder directory, offer in depth resource development training for nonprofits, support fundraising and strategy for the significant OnTrack Greenville initiative, and more.

Accomplishments - July 2019 – June 2020

Networking. GPP members strengthened their relationships with each other and with nonprofit colleagues. More than 340 unique individuals participated in our gatherings, which ranged from educational sessions on predatory lending to working groups on impact investing or the Census to purely social gatherings.

A survey of members in the fall showed that 97% of respondents felt that GPP had strengthened their relationships with other funders and 90% felt GPP had strengthened their relationships with partners in other sectors.

Education. GPP's meetings aim to inform funders on issues in the community, best practices in grantmaking, and more timely, specific topics. Through January 2020, we'd held meetings on

In GPP's sixth year, we stepped up our collaboration, deepened our learning, and leaned into our mission to maximize the impact of philanthropy. We also refined our strategic direction and created a two-year operational plan to do even more in the coming years.



Tish McCutchen with the Jolley Foundation records ideas during the GPP retreat in August 2019. Photo by Tracie Van Auken for RWJF.

diversity, equity, and inclusion, predatory lending, comprehensive planning and growth, and advocacy.

But when COVID-19 hit our nation and schools and businesses closed down the week of March 16th, GPP leapt to action. We held our first webinar on March 25th, and since have met at least bi-weekly to learn, coordinate, and collaborate. We've also joined with the NonProfit Alliance to provide education for both of our members on topics such as the CARES Act's Paycheck Protection Program and employment law. 97% of survey respondents in fall of 2019 felt that GPP had expanded their knowledge. We are proud of what we've been able to do in the months since. A full listing of our meetings since our founding can be seen [here](#) along with [detailed descriptions](#).

Collaboration. The sixth year of GPP has been filled with collaboration. There are several endeavors of which we are most proud:

Race, diversity, equity, and inclusion. We began our programming year with a joint program with NPA on diversity, equity, and inclusion. More than 100 people attended and expressed a hunger for how to pursue their missions with an equity lens. We were developing an in-depth learning and change initiative when COVID hit. We hit pause on the work – until the murders of George Floyd and Ahmaud Arbery confronted us with the fact that our pursuit of racial equity cannot wait. Our next



GPP's meeting with NPA on diversity, equity, and inclusion in September 2019 drew 100 participants

GPP meeting included reflections by philanthropic and nonprofits leaders on equity in our work. And we rapidly launched a [21-day equity challenge](#) with more than 450 GPP and NPA staff and volunteers signed up.

Impact investing has been on our radar for several years, and after convenings and learning, we'd committed to taking action in 2020. But on what, we didn't yet know. COVID presented that

What's Next?

In this time of rising COVID rates in Greenville County, more embattled work for equity, and a highly contentious election season, one could be inclined to say, "Who knows what's next?"

opportunity. We partnered with CommunityWorks, which quickly launched [COVID Relief Loan Funds](#) for businesses, nonprofits, and consumers, and our members invested \$460,000, which CommunityWorks is [already deploying in loans](#) to help our community through the pandemic and downturn.

Advocacy has been a perennial topic in GPP meetings since our founding. But as a part of our new strategic direction, we'd determined to develop an advocacy agenda with our members. The advocacy agenda was handed to us when Greenville County was awarded \$91 million in Coronavirus Relief Funds as a part of the \$2 trillion federal CARES Act. We spearheaded a group of GPP and NPA members to develop an advocacy platform and mobilize our membership in targeted advocacy with Greenville County Council, which we believe resulted in nonprofits' inclusion in funding for small business.

Partnerships with nonprofits have strengthened significantly in our sixth year. GPP and NPA's joint COVID webinars have been expanded into action, including training nonprofits and connecting them with resources to apply for the Paycheck Protection Program loan and subsequent forgiveness, receiving a grant from the United Way of Greenville County to provide technical support to nonprofits in financial planning and strategy, and working together on programming in the coming year.

In addition to these formal partnerships, staff member Katy Smith represents GPP in community and state activities, including serving on the United Way of Greenville County COVID Relief Fund committee, the state's One SC Fund committee, with SC Grantmakers Network, and more.

But thanks to our clear mission to maximize the impact of philanthropy on Greenville County, we do have direction even in time of uncertainty. We will continue with our strategic direction, set at the

beginning of 2020 and modified in April, to work with new partners, to use all of our philanthropic capital, and to do so with an equity lens to make Greenville County a better place for all people. Major initiatives in the coming year include a County Council candidate forum and candidate training for nonprofits and funders, a comprehensive study of revenues to

nonprofits (in partnership with NPA), and deeper work on equity.

None of this would be possible without the partnership and investment of our members. We thank all who joined and gave in 2019. We hope that you will renew that investment or join us for the first time in 2020.

About

The Greenville Partnership for Philanthropy is a network of foundations, corporations, faith communities, federated funds, and tax supported grantors who provide at least \$50,000 in funding annually to at least two nonprofits operating in Greenville County, SC. In 2020, we also welcome individuals who give strategically to Greenville County nonprofits and who are interested in deploying social, moral, intellectual, and reputational capital to improve our community.

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