CHARLESTON ON THE CUSP OF GREATNESS

Being a part of the starting line-up

Growing up in rural Southern West Virginia up a hollow on a hill, going to “town” was a huge deal. You’d load up the family after breakfast at home, commute nearly an hour over hills and through valleys on winding country roads to finally find yourself in the big city, Charleston. I can remember spending almost every Saturday here all the way up until the time I graduated from high school. We would do our weekly grocery shopping, take in a matinee, and obviously eat out somewhere nice.

As I began my college search as a junior in high school, I was the stereotypical West Virginian, eyeballing both WVU and Marshall. Nothing personal against Marshall, but WVU was always more appealing in my eye, probably because I had spent so much time there in the fall for football games from my youth. It wasn’t until the spring before my senior year that I fell head over heels in love. I took the ACT test on the campus of the University of Charleston. After finishing the test, I remember walking all around Riggleman Hall, gazing across the river at the Capitol from the Rotunda. From that moment, I knew I wanted to be a student there—I could just feel it. It wasn’t long after that I visited with my parents and they too fell in love. At that point, I knew I would be a Golden Eagle, but ultimately, a Charlestonian.

My years at the University of Charleston were by far some of the greatest of my entire life thus far. I grew so much as a person and developed into a more open-minded, enthusiastic leader both on campus and throughout the community. Productive work, enlightened living, and community involvement were after all ingrained into the very culture and spirit on campus at the University from day one. My scholarship program, the Welch Colleague Leadership Program, required a three-credit-hour internship experience at a local non-profit organization. Being a Public Policy major with immense passion for the community and giving back, it only seemed fitting to intern at what I believed was the most active, philanthropic organization in area, The Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation. As an intern at the Foundation, I had the honor of working on so many special projects from assisting with the 50th anniversary
celebration to conducting research and providing content for the annual report. My experience at The Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation afforded me one of the most fulfilling experiences of my life, as I learned the importance of philanthropy and investing in our community.

Building on that internship, I took my passion and philanthropic spirit to state government, working at the right hand of a statewide elected official in an executive-level position post-graduation. After serving in that position for nearly four years, I found myself seeking a new challenge and yearning so desperately for a new start, a change of pace, in a new city. Over the past four months, I’ve had the privilege to travel extensively to dozens of cities around the country both near and far. With as much excitement as I found leaving Charleston, I found just as much, if not more upon returning back home. After much soul-searching and consideration, and numerous job interviews in other states, I ultimately made the decision to bloom where I was planted, right here in my city, Charleston.

Although our city and state are in some tumultuous times, I believe this is temporary and that we will come back better than ever before. We are on the cusp of greatness in Charleston. With the more than $120 million dollar renovation of the Civic Center and the recently opened $20 million dollar Innovation Center at the University of Charleston, we are strategically aligning ourselves to become a beacon of modernism for cities of our size. We have the visionaries and stakeholders here to do amazing things, but we have to show others outside of our city and state why the opportunities for growth are limitless. We must showcase our people, who are by far our most valuable resource. Events such as Art Walk, Live on the Levee, and Mountain Stage give our wonderful city so much character and culture. With a similar terrain and budding social culture, why can’t we be a smaller scaled Asheville, North Carolina, with an economy more focused on local tourism and adventure? Why can’t we be the new mecca on the East Coast for millennials and hipsters to visit, play, and eventually live? I can see local breweries and distilleries stringing all the way from the East End through the up and coming West Side of Charleston. Imagine adventure parks for hiking, hunting, off-roading, and other outdoor recreational activities on the outskirts of the city in areas like Sissonville and Elk View.

Instead of sitting on the sidelines being a spectator, I will proudly be part of the starting line-up for the upward direction of our city. I will work with like-minded community and economic development leaders to help attract new businesses. I will discuss and present our city in a positive manner to folks everywhere I go to ensure that we are host to more national and international conferences and conventions. I will utilize my position on the Generation Charleston Executive Board to spark the same passion among the younger generation that I have for this city and state. I will continue contributing in every way possible to the innovation and progress of our city because Charleston is my home.

“I will continue contributing in every way possible to the innovation and progress of our city because Charleston is my home.”

Originally from Dorothy in rural Raleigh County, Bradley Harris is a proud Charleston resident, socialite, and the managing member of Bradley Harris Productions, LLC.
On August 3, we held the 2017 TGKVF Donor Gathering at Chase Tower in downtown Charleston. At this meeting, the Foundation team expressed our deep appreciation for the generosity of our donors and emphasized how meaningful their contributions are to the communities we serve. We also described some of the enhanced services currently available to donors, as well as other refinements that are in the works. It is our hope that these service improvements will allow our donors to see the incredible impacts their contributions make.

Donors may access basic account information through a special portal by clicking the “donate now” button on the Foundation’s website—www.tgkvf.org. Donors who had an account through our previous system are advised that all passwords have been reset. These donors may login to their accounts with their user names and utilize the forgotten password feature. Donors who have never had an online account should create one in order to access their information. Detailed online statements will be available before the end of 2017.

Fifty-five percent of TGKVF’s portfolio is comprised of Donor-Advised and Donor-Designated funds. Donors with these types of funds will have the opportunity to obtain basic profiles on the organizations they support at the beginning of each year. They may also access reports on those organizations’ outputs and outcomes, as they relate to the donors’ contributions, at the end of the year. We will provide details regarding these contributions in our annual fund correspondence and hope that the data gathered from funded organizations will help to guide donor decisions. Additionally, this invaluable information supports TGKVF’s efforts to measure the impact of our community investments.

The Foundation’s board and staff would like to hear from our donors as we value their input. To help us learn from this feedback, we have developed a donor survey. The survey can be completed online at www.tgkvf.org/donorsurvey. Donors who prefer to complete paper surveys may contact our Communications Director, Jane Powell, via email at jpowell@tgkvf.org or by calling the Foundation at 304-346-3620 and she will make arrangements to deliver the paper version. Our donors’ feedback will assist us in making our communities even stronger.

Thank you to the donors who were present at this gathering and thank you to all of those who support the Foundation’s work. We could not grow the multiple forms of wealth our communities need to thrive without your help.

Best Regards,
Michelle

“The Foundation team deeply appreciates the generosity of our donors and their meaningful contributions to the communities we serve.”
The Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation (TGKVF) Board of Trustees approved the distribution of twelve grants totaling $314,107 at its June 21, 2017 meeting.

Women’s Health Center of West Virginia, Inc. received funding for the Oral Health Education and Dental Care for Low-Income Pregnant Women and Veterans project. “Olivia,” pregnant with her first child, disclosed to her case manager that she had bleeding gums, sensitivity to hot and cold foods, nausea, and vomiting associated with her pregnancy. Her case manager made a referral to West Virginia Health Right and Olivia had her first dental cleaning in over five years. Not only is she feeling more confident because her teeth are clean, she also knows that she is providing better care for her unborn child since there is a strong correlation between oral care and healthy pregnancy. Olivia reported a reduction in bleeding gums as she now brushes and flosses more frequently.

TGKVF awarded six responsive grants, totaling $121,500, to Basic Needs and Arts & Culture programs and six proactive grants totaling $192,607 in the Foundation’s Education, Health, and Community Economic Development (CED) priority areas.

**Pollen8, Inc. - Camp Appalachia: $20,000 (Education)**
Camp Appalachia, a new afterschool program for elementary-aged youth in South Charleston, will provide academic and therapeutic assistance to at-risk children. Students will receive tutoring and homework help, use art, music, and theater to express their emotions through play therapy, learn behavioral modification through trauma-informed therapy, and receive a nutritious meal. Funding will support an AmeriCorps VISTA match, scholarships, and a natural playground.

“It takes a village to raise a child.”
– Kathleen Walker, South Charleston City Council President

**Regional Family Resource Network - Families Leading Change Mini-Grant Program: $30,000 (Education)**
Families Leading Change is a statewide grassroots movement with allies across the education system looking to support, fund, and train families who want to make their hometown schools stronger (projects range from a fatherhood engagement initiative to a college readiness program and school-based mental health services). Funding will support mini-grants to parent-led school teams and family capacity-building training.

“When you start a wellness committee or council, getting the students involved by starting a student wellness council almost always leads to parental involvement.”
– Jenny, a parent volunteer at her daughter’s elementary school

**Southern Appalachian Labor School - Accent Education Program: $25,000 (Education)**
Accent Education, an afterschool and summer enrichment program, serves rural, at-risk students in the Upper Kanawha Valley and western Fayette County region. Through this third year renewal grant, the program will provide core academic support with a STEAM emphasis for

“Not only have my son’s grades improved, but his behavior here at home and school is so much better. I have nobody to thank but your organization, your staff, and the After-School Program staff.”
– A parent
students and their families in a safe environment. Funding will support staffing, supplies, and administration.

**Kanawha County Schools - Providing Holistic Care for Students on Charleston’s West Side: $42,000 (Health)**

For a second year, this funding will cover the Community Schools Health Care Coordinator (School Nurse) at Mary C. Snow Elementary School. The coordinator will serve as a liaison between school, Kanawha County Schools Dental Clinics, Family Care Health Clinic, Handle with Care, Legal Aid, and WV Department of Health and Human Services to engage and educate the West Side community regarding preventive practices and resources to improve total health.

“Children need to be healthy to learn, and need to learn to be healthy.”

– Janet Allio, RN School Nurse

**Women’s Health Center of West Virginia, Inc. - Oral Health Education and Dental Care for Low-income Pregnant Women and Veterans: $31,702 (Health)**

Women’s Health Center of West Virginia and West Virginia Health Right will provide oral health literacy education and dental care access to low-income pregnant women and veterans through a collaborative partnership. This is the third year of funding for this renewed grant; funding will support staffing, travel, equipment, and administration services.

“They explained why dental care during my pregnancy was important. I plan to go to the walk-in clinic next week”

– A patient

**Robert C. Byrd Institute - Ten50 Business Accelerator: $43,905 (CED)**

The Ten50 Business Accelerator drives innovation and entrepreneurship, economic development, and ultimately job creation by supporting early-stage and growth driven companies. Ten50 supports companies through seed funding, office space, software perks, education, mentorship, and preparation for outside financing. The process compresses years’ worth of learning-by-doing into just a few months. TGKVF funding will support rent, utilities, travel, training, and contracted services.

“The expert business coaching and access to world-class industry resources have allowed me to start with little more than a prototype and an idea and transform that into a company with a solid business model and an achievable roadmap to market.”

**Community Development Outreach Ministries - Heart and Hand South Charleston & Heart and Hand Putnam County Basic Needs Programs; $22,000 (Basic Needs)**

Heart & Hand Community Service Center provides emergency basic needs assistance for vulnerable residents of South Charleston and Putnam County areas. Funding will support emergency service programs aiding low-income families with their basic needs of shelter, food, clothing, baby supplies, and clothing requirements for employment.

“Not only did my caseworker help by making a payment on my Electric Company account, but she also gave me some other resources that could also help. Without their help, my son and I would have been sitting in the dark.”
Charleston Ballet, Inc. - Charleston Ballet  
2017-18 Season: $17,000 (Arts & Culture)  
Charleston Ballet funding will support the 2017-18 Season and assistance with guest artist expenses for ten programs throughout October; December; and March. All performances exhibit educational and cultural diversity components and have mass appeal to all ages and economic levels including BALLET FOR ALL and 21st Century Learning Programs.

Kanawha Valley Fellowship Home, Inc.:  
$20,500 (Basic Needs)  
The Kanawha Valley Fellowship Home, Inc. (KVFH) is a transitional home for men in recovery from addiction. The home provides shelter, food, and assistance with productive healthy habits through structured accountability. Funding will support KVFH’s utilities, food, and rent.

REA of Hope, Inc. - REA of Hope Utilities:  
$22,000 (Basic Needs)  
REA of Hope, a recovery home for women, fosters recovery from alcohol and/or drug addiction and promotes self-sufficiency. Funding will support utility costs as REA of Hope provides safe, affordable housing for women in a positive homelike environment.

YWCA Sojourner’s Shelter for Homeless Women and Families: $25,000 (Basic Needs)  
Funds will support the operation and essential services costs associated with providing emergency housing, basic needs, and an array of comprehensive support services to individuals and families experiencing homelessness. Sojourner’s primary goal is to provide the education, tools, and resources for participants to become self-sufficient and stably housed.

West Virginia Symphony Orchestra -  
Symphony Sunday 2017:  
$15,000 (Arts & Culture)  
Funding will support expenses related to engaging Charleston’s West Side community as performers and participants in Symphony Sunday. Through this event, the WV Symphony Orchestra aims to share the transformational power of music, raise cultural awareness, and demonstrate that participation in the arts can be a lifelong pursuit whether as a hobby or a profession.

“What began as an experiment in the unknown has become a success that is impacting three challenged communities. We are extremely grateful for your support in making this partnership possible.”  
– Edna Green, Associate Director, PAAC

“The Kanawha Valley Fellowship Home gave me my life back. I got to be the son my parents always deserved and the father my daughter needs”  
– Resident DM

“I just celebrated 2 years of sobriety! The most important thing I got was my self-worth back. I will be forever grateful”  
– Rae of Hope Graduate

“Without Sojourner’s my family and I would not have any place to stay. Thank you all for everything.”  
– CT, a 31-year-old female

“They took me out of a rough childhood and groomed me for society. Thank you.”  
– A former member of the West Virginia Youth Symphony and the WVSO string program who went on to perform at Symphony Sunday
Meet Josh McClung, the newest member of The Greater Kanawha Valley Foundation’s team. Josh recently interned with TGKVF and has now started working on a part-time basis with the Foundation’s Finance Department. Josh, a lifelong Charleston resident, is an accounting and business administration dual-major at the University of Charleston (UC). This fall will begin his senior year and Josh plans to graduate a full year ahead of many of his classmates. In addition to his course schedule, Josh is on the Provost’s and Dean’s Lists, a member of the men’s cross country, track and field teams, the Vice President of Project Development for the Student Government Association, a Resident Assistant, a Welch Colleague, and a part-time employee at Robert’s Running and Walking Shop. Josh plans to pursue an MBA upon the completion of his undergraduate studies with hopes of beginning a career in the finance industry or attending law school and practicing here in West Virginia.

Excelling both academically and athletically, Josh has received honors in the classroom and on the track. He was granted Academic All-American status by the NCAA last year in cross-country; he is also an All-Mountain East Conference performer in cross-country, the 5,000-meter run, and the 10,000-meter run. He is a proud and appreciative recipient of the Dr. O. M. and Ruth A. Harper Scholarship, housed at TGKVF, which is how he was first introduced to the Foundation. Josh’s interests include running, hiking, and other outdoor activities in which he can enjoy the beauty of the Mountain State. In addition to being a dedicated runner, Josh considers himself a coffee connoisseur and food fanatic. He has been an excellent addition to TGKVF’s team and we are very excited to have him on board!

For more information and registration fees visit: www.tgkvfconference.org
Upcoming:

November 2 and 3, 2017
Building Bridges for Good Measure Conference
Workshop tracks will include:
- Leadership
- Program delivery
- Fund development
- Financial management
- Evaluation
Adventures on the Gorge
Lansing, WV
www.tgkvfconference.org