



the generosity trust

2024 IMPACT REPORT

We Empower Christian *Generosity.*

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Leader Letter

Our founder, Dora Maclellan Brown, wanted The Generosity Trust to “Always remember the definitely Christian faith upon which this organization is built.” She wrote these words in 1952, setting the tone for the organization. In 1965, we started as a single-donor private foundation known as the Dora Maclellan Brown Charitable Trust. In 1993, we formally organized as the Chattanooga Christian Community Foundation, and in 2011 rebranded as The Generosity Trust.

It’s been seven decades since Aunt Dora set our direction. By God’s grace, we just completed the most impactful year in our history in 2024.

Our mission has been built on the vision of our founder. Her words are read at the first board meeting every year. They are the words by which we measure ourselves, our impact, and our reach into the community of Chattanooga and beyond.

Our definitely Christian faith.

Christ is preeminent at The Generosity Trust. He always has been and always will be. This organization has never had mission drift. We’ve never strayed. Our goal at the beginning – and the middle – and the end of every year is to lift high the name of Jesus. To honor Him in all we do, in all our words, in all our actions.

We empower Christian generosity. We are diligent, aware, faithful, and strategic.

That is our mission statement, and those are our biblically-based core values. And by God’s grace, we will never stray from them.

We started 2024 with some ambitious goals. To catalyze multi-generational Christian generosity. To establish TGT as a support center of connection, education, and community. To grow TGT as a center of service for the benefit of greater Chattanooga. To grow the number of donor-advised fund holders we serviced and to grow the amount of money those DAF holders invested into worthwhile charities across America.

And, wow, did 2024 deliver.

By the end of 2024, we were actively serving close to 850 families, individuals, and fund holders. We helped them facilitate gifts to generously support organizations, churches, and Christian ministries around the country.

We received over \$50 million in gifts.....and granted out over \$38 million to more than 1,350 charities and churches.

We strengthened both our internally-facing and externally-facing personnel needs, adding key, qualified people who helped TGT meet the needs of our ever-expanding donor base.

We invested over \$200,000 of Board-directed funds into numerous Christian organizations which are making a tremendous impact in the city of Chattanooga. And we invested hundreds of thousands of dollars into seminary students from Chattanooga, the leaders and the impact-makers of the next generation.

We truly believe – we truly understand – that God did this. “This is the Lord’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.” (Psalm 118:23, KJV). We are honored, and humbled, to be used by Him in this glorious work.

This annual report is His story. The unveiling of God’s plan, as He used TGT to help bring hope, and healing, and peace to His people – not only in Chattanooga, but around the world.

To our precious fund holders – we say a huge “thank you.” Thank you for trusting us as we help you make an impact in our city, in our region, in our state, in our country, and around the world.

To our Board of Directors – this work would not be possible without your support, your time, your wisdom, and your guidance.

To the wonderful staff of TGT – the men and women who make TGT what it is – you are valued and loved. I trust you know that you are the best, most loyal, and most cherished people with whom I’ve ever been privileged to work.

To those whom God has called us to serve – this is God’s work. We are honored to be His hands and His feet as we help you bring the good news of Jesus Christ to the world.

To God be the glory....great things He has done!



James R. Barber
President, The Generosity Trust

Mission

At The Generosity Trust (TGT), we empower Christian generosity.

The heart of our work is motivating donors toward kingdom-building generosity. As we continually aim toward that goal, we hold the following core values as vital elements of our culture.

We will be...

(D)iligent.

(A)ware.

(F)aithful.

(S)trategic.

If it wasn’t already apparent, we intentionally arranged those four values. As a principal service to our community, we facilitate DAF(S) – Donor Advised Funds, for fund advisors across the country. While DAFS have many inherent benefits on their own, we believe that when backed by these values and energized by our new initiatives, they will increasingly become a tool for greater impact.

Metrics

TOTAL GRANT AMOUNT

\$38.1MM

YEAR OVER YEAR INCREASE OF \$4.2MM

GRANTS IMPACTING CHATTANOOGA

\$19MM

NUMBER OF GRANTS NATIONWIDE

10,614

GRANT PAYOUT RATE

43%

COMPARED TO THE LATEST NATIONAL PAYOUT RATE OF 23.9%

DAF FUND ADVISORS

1,087

TOTAL GRANTS SINCE 2005

\$350MM

Our Services

DAFS

We help make generosity simple by providing Donor Advised Funds (DAFS). DAFS offer an uncomplicated, flexible, and tax advantageous way to give to your favorite non-profits and ministries. It's like having your own charitable foundation without any of the hassles or costs. And, to make things even better, we do almost all the work!

We offer 4 types of funds to meet the needs of our fund advisors: Giving Funds, Interest Bearing Funds, Actively Managed Funds, and Blended Funds.

SCHOLARSHIPS

We support current and aspiring ministry workers as they continue their studies by offering:

- **The Dora Maclellan Brown Scholarship** is for seminary students seeking a master's degree in any type of ministry.
- **The Timothy Scholarship Program** helps the children and grandchildren of Chattanooga area pastors/ministry leaders receive a post-high school education. These scholarships are also available to anyone from Chattanooga studying for ministry at the post-high school level.
- **The Elevate Scholarship** meets the needs of ministry leaders who seek to take continuing education and/or classes to assist them in their selected field of ministry.

GIVING CIRCLES

Partnering with community members who give with others for greater impact, The Generosity Trust hosts four unique giving circles:

- **Sharing God's Goodness** - Supporting small local ministries serving the African American community.
- **Stepping into Generosity** - Women supporting area ministries serving women and children.
- **Unidos en Compasion** - Supporting churches and nonprofits that serve the local Latino community.
- **Young Givers** - Donors under 40 years of age inspiring whole-life generosity and supporting local nonprofits.

ALPHA FUNDS

The Alpha Fund was created by The Generosity Trust as an incubator for worthy new local Christian ministries and projects that have not yet received their IRS Determination letter as a 501(c)(3) tax exempt entity. This allows ministries the opportunity to pilot their idea and raise their own funds while receiving guidance and covering from TGT. For up to three-years, a new ministry may come under the TGT umbrella as an Alpha Fund to:

1. Raise start-up funds and grow to a point where they are self-sustaining and no longer require the assistance of the Fund.
2. Receive gifts for qualified ministries, offering a tax deduction to their donors.
3. Disburse monies to the new initiatives.

Teaching Biblical Generosity to the Next Generation

THE FRANCESCON'S STORY

How do you teach Biblical Generosity to the next generation?

Several years ago, T.W. and Laurel Francescon began to realize that while they were certainly being generous with their wealth, there was more they could do when it came to being intentional with their giving.

They reached out to The Generosity Trust (TGT) and opened a Donor-Advised Fund (DAF). TGT helped them streamline their giving into their Fund, enabling them to honor the Lord with their first fruits.

A Donor-Advised Fund alone, however, wasn't enough for T. W. and Laurel. They wrestled with how to pass their love of generous giving on to their three children. T.W. and Laurel wanted their children to know that God owns it all (Psalm 24:1), and that they were simply called to be faithful stewards of all He had entrusted to them.

"Biblical generosity is so much more than simply giving to your church and to a few of the causes important to you," said T. W. "Yes, that's important. TGT also helped us think through how to prioritize our giving, bringing it in alignment with God's generous heart. We are hoping that our children get a glimpse of God's generous heart, and we believe one way they can do that is by participating in directing some of God's money to organizations, which they value, from their respective funds."

[Click here](#) to continue learning how T.W. and Laurel's vision for leaving their children a legacy of biblical generosity unfolded and how TGT has been partnering with them along the way.



Young Givers Circle in Action

NETWORKING AT ITS FINEST – INSPIRED BY GENEROSITY.



"Giving melts away our focus on ourselves, and we begin to live as we were made to live – for the glory of God and the good of others."

- John Rinehart

It all started with one simple question to a local grantee. "What is your greatest need right now?" asked Tyler Haar, a founding member of The Generosity Trust's Young Givers Circle.

Without a moment's hesitation, Chrissy Holland, Survivor Services Manager, knew exactly what was needed at Rahab's Rest, one of two local residences overseen by Love's Arm. She had already done her homework and had the estimate in hand. "We have \$16,000 worth of plumbing repairs in the upstairs bathroom, including ceiling repairs in the common area below," said Holland. The problem was immediate and there wasn't \$16,000 in their budget.

Love's Arm is a small organization that relies completely on private donations to provide hope and healing for survivors of trafficking. For this ministry, \$16,000 was a daunting amount of money and they were considering a capital campaign to raise the funds.

Love's arms had received a grant from the Young Givers Giving Circle for other needs. The connections made there paved the way for collaboration beyond the grant. Group members were able to partner with another ministry to meet Love's Arms emergency needs.

[Click here](#) to read the full story of generosity.

Financial Accountability and the need for an Endowment

What purpose does an endowment serve? Isn't it better to just grant it all away? Shouldn't we be funding needs today with today's dollars, and worry about tomorrow's needs at that time?

I get asked those questions from time to time, and they are good questions. I usually answer them with a brief history of The Generosity Trust, which traces its roots back to June 3, 1965.

On that date, the Dora Maclellan Brown Charitable Trust was established between Dora Maclellan Brown (as donor) and the three original trustees: Henry Trotter, Hugh D. Huffaker, and Pemberton Cooley. Those three men set out to assist Mrs. Brown as she honored the Lord with what He had entrusted to her.

Mrs. Brown's founding gift – June 7, 1965 – was 45,000 shares of Provident Life & Casualty stock. She made various stock gifts in the years that followed to the Trust. When she passed away on February 24, 1974 – at the age of 94 – she had arranged for the vast majority of the remainder of her estate to come to the Trust.

The most accurate accounting we have of the original assets of the Trust was on January 1, 1977 – almost three years after her death – when the Trust was valued at \$3,700,294. It was at this time that the trustees began doing some strategic grant making from her assets. The first major grant recipient from the Trust was Covenant College – over \$400,000 given to the college for the building of the Dora Maclellan Brown Chapel, which stands to this day.

I have often remarked that the Trustees could have made a huge splash in the charitable world of the mid 1970's by giving away all of the assets in the Trust to worthwhile charitable organizations. However, Mrs. Brown had different ideas. She had asked the Trustees



to invest wisely and give generously, but to always work to maintain and grow the corpus of the assets. In this way, she envisioned the impact of her generosity extending for generations to come.

Fast forward to the end of 2024. The Trustees through the years – now referred to as our Board of Directors – have indeed invested wisely and given generously. The Dora Maclellan Brown Christian Priority Fund (DMBCP), as we call it, has over \$16 million in investments and real property assets. The Board has generously granted from these assets every year, granting specifically to the causes that were referenced by “Aunt Dora” in our founding, governing document.

We read her letter every year at our Board of Directors meeting in February, and ask ourselves if Aunt Dora would approve of how we have stewarded the assets she entrusted to us. And we believe that she would.

The DMBCP has been used to provide a base of support for The Generosity Trust, enabling us to multiply the outreach of those original assets into our community. One of the reasons we can offer our free, pass-through DAF is because of the underwriting provided by the DMBCP assets – Aunt Dora continues to provide financial support to the Christian giving community of Chattanooga. We previously referenced in this report over \$350 million in charitable grants since 2005. Going back to our founding, that number is over \$400 million.

In addition, we have scholarshipped almost 600 seminary students from Chattanooga, investing in the spiritual leaders of yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

Since the first Donor-Advised Fund (DAF) with the Chattanooga Christian Community Foundation (now The Generosity Trust) was opened in 1993, we now serve close to **800 individuals, families, businesses**, and other entities with DAF services.

The Foundation has over **\$138 million** in total assets, the vast majority of them held in invested DAFs.

In 2005, the Foundation received \$4.5 million in gifts into DAFs; in 2024 that number was over \$51 million. In 2005, the Foundation processed \$4.9 million in DAF grants; **this past year that number was over \$38 million.**

We don't celebrate growth simply for growth-sake. We celebrate growth because it means we've helped more people, and more families, and more businesses experience the joy of giving back to our Generous God.

Just so you know, TGT goes through an extensive external audit every year, as we know we are accountable for every penny that flows into and out of this organization. We are accountable to the Lord, to our donors, and to the community. We strive every year to make sure there are no adjusting entries made at the end of the audit; that just means our books are clean.

So, to return to that original question. What purpose does an endowment serve? In this case, the assets that Dora Maclellan Brown entrusted to our original Trustees back in 1974 - \$3.7 million – has been used to help invest over \$400 million into our community, our churches, and worthwhile ministries and organizations over the past 50 years. We believe that Aunt Dora would be pleased with that return on her investment.

Testimonial

THOUGHTS ABOUT GENEROSITY AND THE GENEROSITY TRUST



From Bruce Zeiser

I learned about The Generosity Trust (TGT) from my Dad's service on their board 30 years ago.

My parents' primary desire, as is ours,

has been to follow Jesus Christ. This has led to their generosity in many areas of life, including financially contributing to a variety of ministries. Dad's decision to give a portion of the family business's profits to organizations aligning with our values is what first showed me the benefit of having a Donor Advised Fund (DAF) with TGT.

I observed the competence and willingness of the TGT staff which makes our giving a reliably pleasant experience. TGT provides helpful online tools and can go deep with tax-advantaged financial offerings. For example, the vast majority of our corporate and personal giving is done through the DAF and TGT does not charge any fees for these funds.

My wife and I no longer have to write a check or remember which one of us was supposed to. Instead, throughout the year, we gift money into our DAF fund. When we want to give to an organization, we email TGT with our giving requests and copy each other or use the online tools. TGT staff sends a check, normally on the same day we request it, and they provide concise reports, summaries, and charts that keep track of who we've given to over the years.

Gifts of stock are easily handled through TGT as well. When tax time comes, if we've made all our gifts to our DAF fund, we no longer

have to dig through the checkbooks or keep track of receipts from the nonprofit organizations we've given to. TGT does all this and provides a summary report when we need it. The tax benefit is realized when we place funds in our DAF, and then we are free to give to the nonprofit organizations of our choice at any time.

TGT is growing and, having recently completed a strategic planning process, is poised to expand their services, invite people into a deeper understanding of generosity, and encourage our community to come together to make a positive impact—all for God's glory.

My board service with TGT has been a joyful experience. I have such respect for Jim Barber, who's been at TGT's helm for 25 years, and am humbled to have been able to serve with such a talented and spiritually mature board of directors. The TGT team's level of customer care and desire to serve is unparalleled. I encourage everyone to consider a relationship with TGT.

Leadership

OUR BOARD



Betsy Brown
Chairwoman



Bart Rolan
Vice Chairman



Eric Youngblood
Secretary



Karen C. Welborn
Treasurer



John Gandy



Thomas Hayslett



Reggie Madison



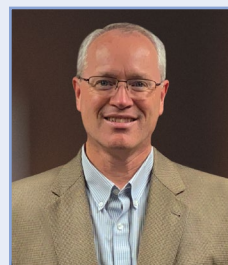
Michael G. Mathis



Michael Tremain



David Worland



Bruce C. Zeiser

OUR TEAM



James R. Barber
President



Rhonda Burditt
Director of Finance & Accounting



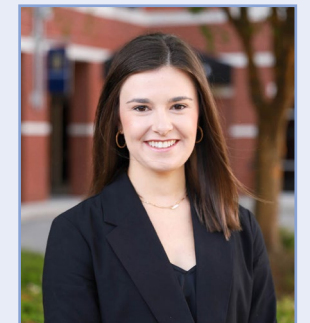
Lindsey Gutierrez
Community Outreach Coordinator



Maria K. Matthews
Director of Generosity & Donor Relations



Amy Nichols
Grants Manager



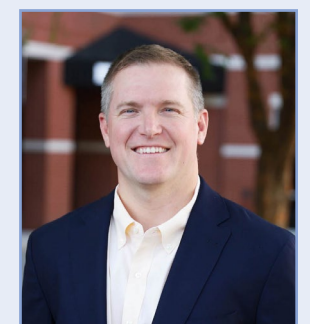
Sarah L. Paone
Assistant Director of Finance and Accounting



Cathy Patterson
Gifts Manager



Marsha Sturm
Office Manager



Josh Suddath
Director of Donor Engagement

Looking Ahead

As much as 2024 has been a blessing, TGT is looking ahead with much anticipation and strategy. In 2025, our priority is to better understand our fund holders' hearts, as well the organizations they support. Our aim is to be a center of connection, support, and community for like-minded donors as well as organizations that serve similar purposes. We're excited to encourage and support collaborative efforts as we continue to seek the flourishing of our city.

WHAT WE'RE SEEING

We're noticing that our fund holders are increasingly interested in learning about the ever-changing landscape of the non-profit community in Chattanooga and beyond. They want to know "who is doing what well" and which organizations are serving similar purposes. In many cases, they want to be more actively involved in the life of the organizations and further attuned to how they can help with more than just their wallets. Additionally, they're wondering how to best give alongside their peers. Our fund holders are asking good questions, and we're asking how we can be more intentional with the questions we pose. Our hope is that those questions lead non-profits toward greater impact and donors to dream of greater generosity.

A GENERATIONAL APPROACH

In some cases, TGT is now beginning to serve the third and fourth generations of donors. However, there is an ocean of opportunity in front of us as we seek to catalyze multi-generational generosity. Some of the best, most insightful, and most clarifying conversations happen in the context of multi-generational gatherings centered around giving, especially through collaborative efforts. We desire to see the hearts of the next generation inspired and engaged as we extend our reach into this new and exciting space.



HOW WE'RE PRAYING

With expectant hearts, we pray that our fund holders would be both encouraged and challenged by intentional conversations. We pray that our fund holders and friends would make connections that only God can form, that generosity would lead to greater unity, and that the non-profit community would be abundantly resourced to accomplish their mission. And lastly, we pray that your heart will be led into worship as you share in the gift of generosity, both in giving and in receiving.



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