IGNITING THE SPARK:

Examples of Next Gen Engagement Strategies

NATIONAL CENTER FOR FAMILY PHILANTHROPY & YOUTH PHILANTHROPY CONNECT, A PROGRAM OF THE FRIEDA C. FOX FAMILY FOUNDATION

LOCATED: New York City

WEBSITE: affund.org

MISSION: The Andrus Family Fund seeks to foster just and sustainable change in the United States. We do this by supporting nonprofit organizations that advance social justice and improve outcomes for vulnerable youth.

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The Andrus Family Fund: Weaving a Rich Tapestry of Youth Philanthropy

The Surdna Foundation is one of the oldest and largest family foundations in the United States. In addition to the Surdna Foundation, the Andrus family founded four other charitable institutions. Early on, the family established a tradition of board service that enabled trustees appointed to the Surdna board to sit on the boards of the family's other charitable institutions. That system worked well enough when the philanthropies were smaller and less complex. But as the programs expanded, so did the demands on the trustees. In 1998, the fourth-generation trustees of the Surdna Foundation began thinking about how to include more family members in philanthropic work. They wanted to create a way to encourage participation by members from different branches of the family to participate, so in February 2000, they inaugurated the Andrus Family Philanthropy Program (AFPP). AFPP is an innovative, inclusive, and flexible program that offers opportunities for family members of all ages and interests to get involved in the family's philanthropies and in public service.

Through these programs, Surdna began weaving a rich tapestry of youth philanthropy that has become a new, but important part of the family's philanthropic tradition. The Andrus Family Fund (AFF), the first and most robust of the Andrus Family Philanthropy programs emerged from this process and has evolved to be a strategic grant maker that has awarded more than $42 million in grants since its inception. It was established in 2000 to give Andrus family members between the ages of 25 and 45 an opportunity to learn about and participate in organized philanthropy. Legally a sub-fund of the Surdna Foundation and subject to its oversight, AFF has always operated largely autonomously with a highly engaged Board, its own mission statement, grant making programs, and independent reputation. Additionally, the Board Experiential Training (BETs) program and the Andrus Youth Service Program (AYSP) have grown to become signature programs that have equipped more than 50 emerging leaders with the tools to create social change through their service and their leadership in communities across the country.

AYSP: The Andrus Youth Service Program is a program for Andrus family members and family members of Surdna Foundation staff between the ages of 14 and 18. AYSP is designed to:

- Grow a network of youth philanthropists.

- Encourage youth involvement and leadership in philanthropy.

- Guide youth through their first experiences with grant making and community service.

Key elements of the program include developing a project that matches participants' passion and interests and awarding grants of up to $1000 to nonprofit organizations in their local communities.

BETS: The Board Experiential Trainings is a program for Andrus family members between the ages 18 and 24. BETS is designed to:

- Explore the intricate connections between social justice and philanthropy.

- Provide a working knowledge of the work of the Andrus Family Fund.

- Provide meaningful engagement in the grant making process.

Participants collaborate with AFF Board members to solicit ideas and award grants totaling up to $25,000 for nonprofit organizations across the country.

AFF: Much of AFF's early grant making was guided by the Transitions Framework and the belief that social change efforts will have a better chance for success when the emotional and psychological effects of the change process are recognized and addressed. AFF's Board and staff

adopted this framework and applied it broadly to social change in two program areas: (1) youth's passage from foster care to independence; and (2) community reconciliation.

Building on best practices and the lessons learned from this work, in 2014 AFF announced a new strategic direction that is intended to make a positive impact in the lives of America's most vulnerable youth. The strategy takes a "grant plus" approach that provides grantees with connections to people and resources that can build their capacity while advancing their work.

AFF awards $4 million a year and is focused on young adults between the ages of 16-24 that have been impacted by the foster care and juvenile justice systems and organizations who are doing great work to connect these now young adults to the positive support and resources needed for a long and successful life. Our approach is straightforward and laser focused:

- We support organizations whose work directly connects youth to the people and services they need to become self-sustaining adults.

- We commission research that helps identify what works and what doesn't when it comes to creating sustainable change in young people's lives.

- We work closely with our grantees to advance and advocate for programs and policies that are proven to put youth on a path to a successful and sustainable future.

- We support organizations that utilize community organizing as a tool to remove barriers and create social change.

Adult Perspective:

By passing along the best we have to offer to the next generation and listening to the younger generation, as well as to those who came before us, has served our family well.

— Kelly Nowlin, Surdna Foundation Board Member

The future is full of possibility. I'm proud of what AFF has achieved over the past 14 years, and I'm really looking forward to our progression. There's lots of work to be done and we're honored to be at the forefront of change.

— Leticia Peguero, Andrus Family Fund Executive Director

*With great thought and care, AFF has chosen our core values of **deep engagement** with the communities we work in and with, **just opportunities** for all—no matter what your life circumstance, **connected innovation** that drives our work forward, and **sustained impact** in communities and in the lives of the young people that we work with. We want to see our work last for many years to come. We envision a world where all young people, no matter their circumstance, have the opportunity for a good life.*

— Kim Kaupe, Andrus Family Fund Board Chair

Next Gen Perspective:

AYSP has taught me so much about focus and channeling my passions. Don't be afraid of having multiple interests because throughout your own personal process you will discover your correct path. Philanthropy and service have taught me the power some have to effect change, so embrace this honor and do good in the world!

—Isabel Griffith, AYSP Alum

The knowledge I've gained in both philanthropy and social justice have augmented my personal and professional life—I am more willing to engage with others (and myself) on issues of social inequity, and have vastly expanded my understanding of what "counts" as philanthropy.

– Naomi Wright, BETS Alum

I truly treasure the time I spent participating in the BETs program. It not only provided me the unique opportunity to get an up-close look at the grant making process and AFF, but was also really fun! It was such a neat experience to connect with cousins I'd never met from all across the country and know we were all there because we wanted to learn more about family philanthropy.

—Molly Thorpe, BETs Alum and Andrus Family Fund Board Member

Lessons Learned:

1. **Develop clear and attainable goals for what you want your youth philanthropy program to accomplish.** Our goals have evolved over time but it was clear to the founding family members that the overarching goal was to create programs that kept family members connected to the legacy of John E. Andrus.

2. **Develop a plan for providing adequate resources for your youth philanthropy programs.** Putting programmatic efforts into place takes both people resources and financial resources.

3. **Be flexible.** Making program modifications that reflect young people's interests can often evolve over time.

4. **Meet young people where they are.** Scheduling programs around young people's calendars and providing them with concrete, tangible ways in which they can make decisions and explore real world issues, is critical.

5. **Build in time to foster relationships between the youth and program staff.** Our program staff and consultants have had a variety of experiences, but the experience that we value the most is their ability to authentically engage young people and understand the positive qualities that influence young people's development, helping them become caring, responsible, and productive adults.

6. **Incorporate opportunities for young people to be engaged as active partners and leaders who can help move communities forward.** Making real time decisions, prioritizing service learning and encouraging dialogue about social justice can be the spark that allows young people to be change-makers in this world.

7. **Do it your way.** The progress that the Andrus Family Fund has made is due in large part to the encouragement of founding Surdna board members to challenge current thinking and practices and design a grant making approach that reflects the AFF board's interest in promoting social change.

Resources Available to Share

Copies of the following resources are available through NCFP's Family Philanthropy Online Knowledge Center or by contacting NCFP at ncfp@ncfp.org.

- Andrus Youth Service Program Handbook and Application Packet
- 2015 Board Experiential Training (BETS) RFP
- Excerpt from the BETS Curriculum
- *Next generation leadership: Exploring transition at the Andrus Family Fund* by Deanne Stone
- *Sustaining tradition: Launching the Andrus family philanthropy program* by Deanne Stone