

Donor Profiles

Giving in Action: Many donors in Silicon Valley are generous and strategic in supporting education. They are learning from peers and from the experts on the ground. They listen to understand. They revise what they give to and more importantly, how they give, as a result. They realize that this work is complex, that change takes time, and that they are not the experts. They've learned to give with trust, engage with grace, and offer hope.

Here are six Silicon Valley donors who shared their local education giving approach with us.

Note that the issue areas we associate with organizations are based on donor strategy, not necessarily the strategy or mission of the nonprofit.

Kelly Pope

Partner and Strategic Advisory Board Member, Silicon Valley Social Venture Fund (SV2) (local giving community)



“I wish I would have had a systems mindset earlier. Even though systems-level work is harder to measure, it's really important. I have also realized that we need to support and advocate for the celebration and elevation of the entire teaching profession while also ensuring that ALL of our very young ones get a healthy start. How can the philanthropic sector innovate to help impact those key education levers?”

Why Fund Education?

Kelly chose to invest in education after a 25-year career as a software executive developing interactive media and educational technology products. Adjusting her giving strategy through experience, ongoing donor education, and a commitment to “moving the needle,” she currently focuses on early learning, mental health, and trauma-informed approaches within early childhood education.

Giving Guidance

- Work in collaboration with others, to achieve more.
- Develop a systems-level mindset in order to address root causes of inequities in education, in tandem with supporting impact at an individual student level.
- Study programs that have worked in other places to get ideas and map those to the local context.

PORTFOLIO SNAPSHOT

ECE: Bring Me A Book

Student Wellbeing: Center for Youth Wellness • YMCA Project Cornerstone | YMCA Silicon Valley

Teacher & Leader Talent & Development: New Teacher Center • Alder Graduate School of Education

Family Engagement: SOMOS Mayfair

Out-of-School Time: Citizen Schools

K-12: Communities in Schools • Science is Elementary

Policy, Advocacy & Organizing: SOMOS Mayfair • Children Now

Kathy Kwan

The Eustace-Kwan Family Foundation



“I look for connected leaders who understand the needs of their community, know how to manage their resources and have the capacity to adapt and drive change. When I find the right partners, I get out of the way and try not to overwhelm them with large data requests. Many of my partners lead large, complex organizations and I want them to focus on maximizing their impact, not making reports to me.”

Why Fund Education?

Kathy funds education because of the powerful role it played in her own family’s journey. Growing up in San Francisco’s Chinatown during the 1950s, Kathy’s parents endured discrimination, significant family challenges and limited opportunity. Education was their ticket to greater social and economic mobility.

Inspired by her parents’ story, Kathy invests in a wide range of initiatives focused on skill building and educational equity. She takes a hands-on, flexible, and responsive approach while building strong relationships with local leaders and actively learning through site visits, volunteering and meeting the beneficiaries of her grants.

Giving Guidance

- Invest in the strategic plan of the organization or the school rather than creating a new project or area just for yourself.
- Make a commitment to fund the community, not the person—leaders can come and go.
- Expect at least a 3-5 year investment, if not longer, to see change.
- Learn to weather changes and the storms, as grantees must and do.

PORTFOLIO SNAPSHOT

Teacher & Leader Talent & Development: [East Palo Alto Academy](#) • [Redwood City School District](#) • [Sequoia Union High School](#) • [Menlo Park City School District](#)

Out-of-School Time: [St. Francis Center](#) • [Menlo-Atherton High School](#) • [Sequoia Union High School District](#)

College & Career: [Foundation for a College Education](#) • [JobTrain](#) • UC Berkeley: [Data Sciences initiative](#) & [Berkeley Basic Needs Fund](#) • Stanford University: [Education Partnerships Program](#) • SF State: [Career Services & Leadership Development Program](#) & [Health Career Connection](#)

Family Engagement: [Menlo Park City School District](#)

Tammy Crown

Philanthropist; Board Chair, Teach for America – Bay Area; Director, World Wildlife Fund; Director, The Nueva School



“Try to give general operating support funds rather than program funds. You have to trust an organization’s leaders, trust they know what they’re doing and putting your money to its best possible use to advance their mission. If you can, also give multi-year grants. And don’t wait until the end of the year to make all your giving; allow organizations to make longer-term plans and focus time on their work rather than fundraising. Finally, make a plan for giving. You can’t solve every problem; if you have a strategy, even if it’s high level, you will have far greater impact and you will save yourself time over the long-term.”

Why Fund Education?

Tammy and her husband Bill invest widely across the K-12 educational spectrum to foster equity, opportunity, and economic mobility. They currently prioritize investments addressing pandemic-related learning loss as well as systemic challenges, including tutoring, high-quality summer programming, talent recruitment and development, and systems redesign and improvement.

Giving Guidance

- Support non-profits holistically; once you have done your due diligence, trust their leadership and give general operating funds whenever possible to create maximum flexibility.
- When you start to “date” a new nonprofit, it works well to start small and get to know the organization, and then don’t be afraid to make big bets.
- I would rather give one six-figure grant to an outstanding organization I believe in, than 10 smaller sized ones. You may make a lot of people happy with the latter strategy, but you will really limit your impact.
- Don’t penalize an organization if they have a set-back one year, are facing a challenge or experience a failure in one of their strategic bets; ask thoughtful questions and see how to best support them.

PORTFOLIO SNAPSHOT

Teacher & Leader Talent & Development: [Teach For America Bay Area](#) • [Alder Graduate School of Education](#) • [New Leaders](#) • [Surge Institute](#) • [Instruction Partners](#)

Family Engagement: [Springboard Collaborative](#) • [Innovate Public Schools](#)

College & Career: [OneGoal](#) • [Pivotal](#) • [Braven](#) • [Tipping Point](#) • [JobTrain](#)

Student Wellbeing: [Child Mind Institute](#)

K-12: [KIPP: Northern California](#) • [Voices College-Bound Language Academies](#) • [Silicon Schools Fund](#) • [Ravenswood Education Foundation](#) • [Woodside High School](#) • [New Schools Venture Fund](#)

Out-of-School Time: [Boys & Girls Clubs of the Peninsula](#) • [StreetCode Academy](#)

Policy, Advocacy & Organizing: [Innovate Public Schools](#)

Castellano Family Foundation



“What other people see as small successes, we see as critical successes. We don't give a lot of money. We are looking at consistent funding, and to see impact in both the short and long term. We do local, place-based, community-based giving. These things will have an impact on eliminating racism over time.”

Armando Castellano

Why Fund Education?

Inspired by family matriarch Carmen Castellano, a deeply devoted champion for equity in education through both investment and advocacy, the Castellano family funds across the educational spectrum, including ECE, parent engagement, and college. Led by second-generation family members Carmela Castellano-Garcia and Armando Castellano, a founding member of the Donors of Color Network, the foundation partners with local, BIPOC-led community-based organizations to support their success and long-term sustainability. The Castellano Family Foundation's Blueprint for Change initiative, informed by over 65 such organizations, was the catalyst for creation of the [LatinXCEL Fund](#), a partnership with Silicon Valley Community Foundation to foster greater investment in Silicon Valley's Latinx leaders, organizations, and communities.

Giving Guidance

- Fund BIPOC-led, BIPOC-driven solutions—they have earned trust from communities.
- BIPOC-led organizations are a great asset to the region, employing effective cross-sector approaches that generate impact on multiple fronts for communities of color. Start with a strength-based approach which acknowledges that.
- Scaling up is not a “one size fits all” approach, and broader is not always better. “Scale down” in a place by going deep.
- Give consistent, long-term funding to organizations. This allows them to spend more of their time on meeting community needs.

PORTFOLIO SNAPSHOT

ECE: [Grail Family Services](#) • [SOMOS Mayfair](#)

Family Engagement: [PIQE-San Jose](#) • [Sunday Friends](#)

Student Wellbeing: [Alum Rock Counseling Center](#) • [New Hope for Youth](#)

College & Career: [South County Cal-SOAP](#) • [Chicana Latina Foundation](#)

Out-of-School Time: [Youth Alliance](#) • [Third Street Community Center](#) • [ConXion to Community](#)



Shannon Hunt-Scott

President and Co-Founder, The Scott Foundation; Board, Educare California at Silicon Valley; Board Chair, Hillbrook School; Board, The Tech Interactive



“These are intractable issues that will take a long time to solve, so stick with it, through the hard times. Give your organizations the kind of support and patience they need to do the work. Nonprofits need to know the funding will carry through to preserve programs they launch and people they hire.”

Why Fund Education?

Shannon funds educational equity as a springboard for opportunity and an investment in lifelong student success. She uses a hands-on, place-based approach to giving, focusing on East San Jose and a suite of organizations serving young people, as well as supporting policy reform at the national level.

Giving Guidance

- Just start!
- Be a great listener to organization leaders and program staff.
- Talk to five people with experience funding in the education space—each person will leave you with something to research or may be willing to make an introduction.
- Give general operating support dollars, make a multi-year commitment, and stay the course.

PORTFOLIO SNAPSHOT

Teacher & Leader Talent & Development: [Facing History and Ourselves](#) • [The Tech Interactive](#) • [Science is Elementary](#)

College & Career: [Peninsula Bridge](#) • [Breakthrough Silicon Valley](#)

ECE: [Educare California at Silicon Valley](#)

K-12: [Scott Center for Social Entrepreneurship at Hillbrook School](#) • [ACE Charter Schools](#) • [Vida Verde](#) • [BUILD Bay Area](#) • [Science is Elementary](#) • [The Tech Interactive](#)

Michelle Boyers

CEO, Give Forward Foundation; Board Member, Ravenswood Education Foundation, Teach for America, Leading Educators, New Leaders, Teach Plus



“I encourage donors to try not to come in with solutions, but instead to listen to the local teachers, families, and school leaders and follow their lead in determining what type of support they need. Often the strategies required are more than enrichment or extra tutoring — but instead are the less sexy (but very hard!) improvements in the teachers' capacity to deliver rigorous instruction to students below grade level.”

Why Fund Education?

Michelle is passionate about educational equity because of her own educational journey attending low-quality, rural schools, as well as her professional experience working in large urban school systems. She knows it is possible for public schools to enable all students to achieve at high levels because she has seen it and done it. She takes a highly-engaged, place-based, systems-change approach, focusing on school leadership, teacher development for improved instructional quality, and internal capacity building in districts.

Giving Guidance

- Listen more than you talk. You'll be surprised about what you learn from the people doing the work on the ground.
- Embrace a long-term view and give patient, unrestricted capital that can help leaders weather the inevitable storms. Changing public education is a long game.
- Remember that data and metrics are important, but capacity building is just as important.

PORTFOLIO SNAPSHOT

Systems & Schools: [Ravenswood Education Foundation](#) • [Redwood City Education Foundation](#) • [Tipping Point](#)

Out-of-School Time: [Boys & Girls Clubs of the Peninsula](#) • [StreetCode Academy](#) • [Citizen Schools](#)

Family Engagement: [Innovate Public Schools](#)

Policy, Advocacy & Organizing: [Innovate Public Schools](#)

Teacher & Leader Talent & Development: [Teach for America Bay Area](#) • [Alder Graduate School of Education](#) • [Leading Educators](#) • [TNTP](#) • [New Leaders](#) • [Instruction Partners](#) • [Reach University](#) • [Education Resource Strategies](#) • [Teach Plus](#) • [Educators for Excellence](#)

The logo for Magnify Community features a large, stylized white letter 'M' in the background. The 'M' is composed of several overlapping, semi-transparent shades of blue and purple, creating a sense of depth and movement. The word 'Magnify' is written in a white, sans-serif font, with the 'M' being significantly larger than the other letters. Below 'Magnify', the word 'Community' is written in a smaller, white, sans-serif font.

Magnify
Community

www.magnifycommunity.com