



Community Matters

Doing Good in Your Community



The Guilford Foundation looks forward to putting its strategic plan in action and seeing the community benefit from the results. After all, it's all about enriching the quality of life by connecting people who care with causes that matter, now and for future generations to come.

Strategic Planning for a Fulfilling Future

Much has changed in the non-profit world over the last few years. The COVID-19 pandemic was a huge driver. There was immediate and dire need. There were no “hands on” ways for non-profits to operate. And there were no traditional in person events with which to raise funds. The virtual world became all too real as organizations needed to re-invent themselves and their offerings

Impetus for Evolution

With the backdrop of a changing landscape coupled with a growing endowment (reaching \$6 million at the end of 2022), The Guilford Foundation (TGF) recognized that it was important to develop a new strategic plan that would recognize and respond to the community's changing needs as well as position TGF for the future. “Staying aligned with the issues that matter to the community is essential for our success,” states TGF Executive Director Liza Petra. “The strategic planning process gave us critical external input and benchmarking insight to help us make an even bigger impact using leadership, innovation, and investment.”

The two-phase process commenced in the fall of 2021. Phase 1 included extensive quantitative and qualitative data collection to inform the board's planning deliberations. Phase 2 consisted of multiple work sessions with the Strategic Planning Committee and a work session with the full TGF board to review TGF's current mission, create a values statement, and develop a set of goals and strategies to guide TGF's work over the next three years.

Planning Process Results

As a result of its work, the TGF Board adopted a slightly revised mission, its first ever values statement, and enumerated strategic goals to guide its efforts going forward.



Above: Current TGF Board Chair, Linda Weber and TGF Executive Director, Liza Petra.
Photo credit: Pam Miller.



2022 competitive grant recipients:
Women and Family Life Center and
Guilford Center for Children.

TGF's mission: *To enrich the quality of life in our community by connecting people who care with causes that matter, now and for generations to come.* **Values Statement:** *The Guilford Foundation values integrity and equity as we actively seek to be a responsive, collaborative, and trusted leader that makes a positive difference in our community.*

Five Key Goals

The Strategic Plan enumerates five key goals:

- 1. Community Investment** – To improve impact, advance equity, and/or encourage innovative solutions to community challenges and opportunities.
- 2. Community Leadership** – To build upon TGF's recognized role as a leader and convenor on major community issues and initiatives.
- 3. Outreach and Marketing** – To broaden community awareness of TGF's work and impact.
- 4. Financial Resource** – To double annual philanthropic resources raised over the next five years.
- 5. Organizational Capacity** – To increase TGF capacity to accomplish strategic plan priorities.

What does this mean for Guilford?

As noted by TGF Board Chair Linda Weber, the process made it clear that the community trusts TGF, sees TGF as responsive to the needs of the community, and recognizes TGF as a leader in finding solutions to problems. “The Foundation aspires to live more fully into the trust, leadership and responsiveness we are known for,” says Weber.

What does this look like via the Strategic Plan?

“It means convening community leaders on a regular basis to build relationships, to identify issues, and to seek opportunities for partnership,” Weber underscores. “It also means combining the traditional grantmaking process with a proactive process – i.e., listening and identifying gaps in services, encouraging opportunities for innovation and ways to advance equity.” It's all about leadership, responsiveness and trust.

