

**FUNDING  
PERFORMANCE**



# **GROW WITH MINDSET**

**The Evolution of Tricia and Jeff Raikes's Philanthropy**



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Neither **Jeff** nor **Tricia Raikes**, the husband and wife who lead the Seattle-based Raikes Foundation, grew up with wealth. Jeff grew up on a farm in Nebraska, where his childhood dream was to work for the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Tricia grew up in a loving family in a modest home in Seattle, when it was still an unassuming town. Her father, who didn't finish college, worked in sales. Her mother was the secretary of the Catholic church the family attended, managing all of the church's operations without much in the way of pay or recognition.

However, as Jeff and Tricia explained to us in their Seattle waterfront offices, they did grow up with privilege.

Jeff's education in the concept of privilege started in 1976, during his freshman year at Stanford. He became close friends with his African American roommate, [Kenneth Nunn](#), who also grew up in Nebraska, less than 40 minutes from Jeff's hometown. But Kenneth came from an urban neighborhood that was the cultural inverse of Jeff's all-white farming community. "It was an eye opener for me to recognize that it probably wasn't safe for Kenneth to come visit me in my town," Jeff explained. "I came to realize that I had privilege that Kenneth didn't. I had been riding the up escalator, and Kenneth was running up the down escalator."

Their sophomore year, Jeff and Kenneth moved to Stanford's African-American-themed dorm, [Ujamaa](#), which means

“I came to realize that I had privilege that Kenneth didn't. I had been riding the up escalator, and Kenneth was running up the down escalator.”

Jeff Raikes



#### [The Raikes Foundation](#)

**Mission:** The Raikes Foundation invests in youth-serving institutions and systems to make them more effective in supporting all young people, especially those who have been most marginalized.

**Location:** Seattle, WA

**Year Established:** 2002

**Staff:** 15

**Endowment:** \$120 million

**2018 Grants:** \$21.7 million

**Average Grant Size:** \$94,000

“extended family” in Swahili. Jeff lived at Uj, as it's known on campus, for three years. “I'm so glad I had that opportunity,” he said. “I got two thirds of my education at Stanford outside the classroom. Living at Uj was a big part of that.”

That same year, Jeff and another friend from Uj, walked together into a convenience store in nearby East Palo Alto. Because Jeff had his hands in his pockets and his friend was black, the store owner reflexively reached under the counter to grab his gun. Jeff was oblivious to the store owner's move. His friend was not. As soon as they left the store, the friend turned to Jeff and blurted, “Don't you ever do that again!” As a person of color, he had learned early in his life that he had to keep his hands visible every time he walked into a store. The incident has stayed with Jeff for more than 40 years.



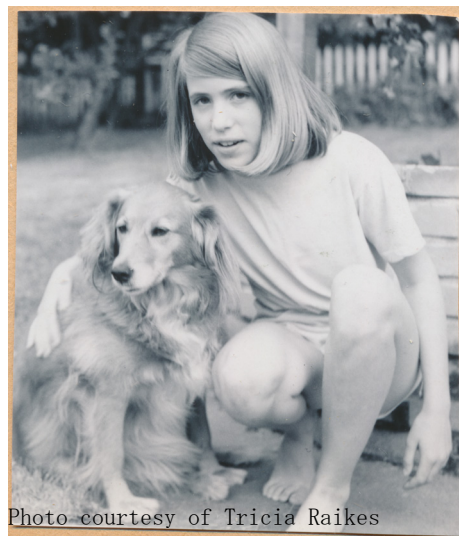
I still have vivid pictures ... the dynamic ... between those who had wealth and privilege and those whose parents were working class.



Tricia Raikes

Jeff's awakening to the painful realities of race drove him to activism at Stanford. He was arrested in a protest on campus after the board voted not to divest from companies doing business in apartheid South Africa. (He's now the [chairman of the Stanford board](#).)

Tricia's awakening to the concept of privilege came a bit earlier in life. Part of her childhood neighborhood had stately homes with grand views, and the other part, where she lived, was much more humble. Many people in both parts of the neighborhood attended the same church, the one where her mother was the secretary. "I still have vivid pictures in my mind of the dynamic at church between those who had wealth and privilege and those whose parents were working class," Tricia explained to us, in a Raikes Foundation conference room on a rainy Seattle day. "As a young girl, I was at times upset by this. And although my mom always acted with grace, I know those manifestations of classism took an unspoken toll on her." These experiences gave Tricia a strong sense of fairness, justice, and the importance of belonging.



Years later, she had to relive those memories when **Michaela**, the oldest of Tricia and Jeff's three children, fell victim to persistent bullying at her parochial school. The bullying wasn't based on wealth- or class-based privilege; it was "mean girl" behavior that went unchecked by the school's administration or teachers. "Every day, we would see this beautiful young girl recoiling from the daily bullying," Tricia recounted. "It caused a huge hit to her sense of self-worth." As Jeff explained in a [2012 speech](#), when he was the CEO of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, "Middle school often felt like an exercise in survival for her. There were days when she was bullied and excluded. She couldn't figure out how to fit in.... This rolled over to her sense of intellectual capacity."

Michaela's story has a happy ending. Jeff and Tricia had the means to send their daughter to an all-girls high school that had a healthy, supportive environment.

As a result, Michaela thrived in high school, spent a gap year as a volunteer on South Dakota's Lower Brulé Indian Reservation, and then followed in her dad's footsteps and went to Stanford. She is now the dean of culture and restorative practice at Highline High School, a large, diverse public school.

## Passion + Resources

Tricia and Jeff's experience with Michaela's middle-school struggles was the spark that led them to their philanthropic focus. In the words of the foundation's website, "The couple realized that if their own children, who had every advantage, were having a tough time, millions of young people without the Raikes's resources were relying on outmoded institutions that didn't truly have the tools and training to support their healthy development."

The money to start the foundation came from both partners winning "the Microsoft lottery." Tricia started at Microsoft in 1981, when she was recruited by a big, exuberant guy named **Steve Ballmer** to help build a marketing and communications function for the 75-employee startup company. "My friends thought I was crazy," she told us. "They didn't know what software was." Jeff joined Microsoft a few months later. Ballmer convinced him to leave a job as a program manager at Apple to lead product marketing for what would become the Microsoft Office group.

Tricia and Jeff met on the job. In addition to many other responsibilities, Tricia ran the Microsoft presence at trade shows. The night

before an industry gathering in Las Vegas, the two found themselves at a dinner for Microsoft employees, on the opposite ends of a Benihana table. After dinner, some of the men hatched a plan to do some gambling. Jeff heard that the woman at the other end of the table planned to go dancing. "That was my plan, too," Jeff said, his default smile turning to a big laugh. "He was a good dancer, especially for a farm boy from Nebraska," Tricia said. "I learned later that it was his friends at Ujamaa who had taught him his moves." Two years later, the two became the first couple to have met and married while at Microsoft.



After Tricia and Jeff started their foundation, they learned that there were relatively few nonprofits focused on the middle-school years. As they studied this age group, they found research showing how important these years are for helping kids prepare for a successful transition to adulthood.

One of the couple's most influential learning visits was at the home of the noted Stanford psychologist **Carol Dweck**, who originated the now-popular term "growth mindset." Dweck explained to them that kids are acutely sensitive to the signals they get from



parents, teachers, and other adults. If students get signals that their intelligence and abilities are locked in at birth, they tend to develop a “fixed mindset,” which leads them to shut down, rather than double down, when they need to muscle through a difficult challenge.

For example, if you’ve been beaten down by years of negative signals from teachers or other adults and have come to believe “you’re just not college material,” why would you put in lots of work in school? You’d probably see that as a hopeless waste of effort. Sadly, many students, particularly those who have been the most marginalized, get similar messages all the time and come away feeling hopeless and powerless to change their fate. However, if you have caring adults in your life who help you understand that your intelligence and abilities can be developed through hard work and persistence, you’re likely to develop a growth mindset and be willing to invest yourself in learning, no matter how hard things get.

Tricia and Jeff internalized these insights and used them to drive their initial grants in the fields of education and out-of-school time. For example, they began funding additional

research on how children learn and develop, particularly in adolescence.

## Applying the Growth Mindset: Working with Grantees

Over the past 17 years, Tricia and Jeff have tried to apply that same growth mindset to their philanthropic efforts. One key element has been learning how to build strong relationships with grantees—the kind that creates room for truth-telling, not sugar-coating; power-sharing, not strong-arming; and joint learning, not Monday-morning quarterbacking.

Jeff said he learned a great deal about grantee relationships at the Gates Foundation, but some of that learning came the hard way. “When I first got to Gates, I used the term ‘partners.’ But some of my colleagues said, ‘What are you talking about? They’re not partners; they’re grantees.’ That view sets a negative tone. It enhances the already-distorted power structure.”



Jeff tried to model a more-relational approach whenever he visited the organizations Gates supported. “I learned quickly not to ask partners, ‘How are we doing?’ They just say nice things. Instead I started asking, ‘What’s the one thing we could do differently to help your work be better?’... I recognize that the power structures will always be skewed. But I believe that humility can help.”

One of his best lessons in humility came in the form of an anonymous survey of grantees he commissioned at Gates. “I had heard about the Center for Effective Philanthropy and its [Grantee Perception Report](#) [GPR], so I commissioned one. When I did it, the results were awful. It showed the cultural challenges we had internally at that time.”

Jeff and Tricia have prioritized relationship-building at their foundation. In an internal culture document, they captured their aspirations as follows: “We invest the time needed to build durable relationships. We earn trust through listening, humility, joint work, and learning. We rely on the expertise of our partners who are closest to the work and the communities with which they work. When we interact with our grantees and partners, we are mindful of who speaks and when, and whose opinions are most often sought after or overlooked. We strive to be conscious of moments when it is important to cede power, or when circumstances require intentional power sharing.” But while this work is underway, Jeff and Tricia agree they still have a lot of work to do to achieve these goals.

**Erin Kahn** joined the foundation in 2007 as its first executive director. (She is leaving

in 2019 to run a consulting practice.) She brought a perspective on grantee relationships that she developed as the associate director of Social Venture Partners (SVP) Seattle, where she and founding director **Paul Shoemaker** built a culture of mutual respect between SVP and its grantees. Tricia and Jeff gave Kahn a mandate to build out her staff in a way that would deliver on the foundation’s relationship aspirations. They realized from the start that would mean building a staff larger than most foundations with similar assets. “Jeff and Tricia made a conscious choice to invest deeply in staff relative to our grant budget,” she said. “They wanted us to develop a rapport with grantees ... where we and our grantees feel a high degree of trust and candor.”

“ I commissioned [a Grantee Perception Report]. The results were awful. ”

Jeff Raikes

Almost all of the Raikes Foundation grantees we spoke with felt that the foundation’s staff has done an exceptional job of building that rapport. Here are some representative sentiments:

- Dr. **Sasha Rabkin**, Equal Opportunity Schools: “My experience over the last three years with RF has been the single best philanthropic experience of these 20 years.... With some of our larger [funders], it can almost feel like we are one of their race horses—cared for in the way that someone might want you to win a race

but not showing up at the stable to do the dirty work. **Zoë [Stemm-Calderon]**, director for education] has consistently shown up for us ... and engaged us in ideas and connections that make us better.... Zoë is exceptional.”

- **Lisa Quay**, Mindset Scholars Network: “Zoë and **Dina [Blum]**, program officer for education] ... have been infinitely generous with their time, expertise, and connections in the education sector. [They’re] in a class of their own. [We] have candid conversations about where we need to go and how we can get there with their support.”
- **Mark Putnam**, Accelerator YMCA: “**Katie [Hong]**, who leads the foundation’s homelessness work] is extremely dogged. She’s a collaborator... That’s not that common in philanthropy, where people seem to want to carve out their own thing and build a name for doing that.”

UC Berkeley Professor **john a. powell**, who spells his name in lower-case letters, has had a particularly good vantage point for observing the foundation; he’s not only a grant recipient but also a close advisor to Tricia, Jeff, and the staff on equity issues. Powell offered high praise but also acknowledged room for growth. “At this point in my career, when I approach [potential donors], what I ask for is not just resources,” he told us, in a soft, gentle voice that sometimes contrasts with his bold, powerful messages. “I say, ‘I want to be able to make suggestions to you that might be out of your comfort zone—and you can do the same.’ I feel like I have that relationship with Jeff and Tricia. Not 100 percent, but it’s getting there.”

In 2016, the foundation commissioned a Grantee Perception Report, despite Jeff’s comeuppance experience at the Gates Foundation. The results were strong in some areas. For example, they learned that grantees rated the foundation:

- in the top quarter of funders on the strength of its relationships with grantees
- in the top quarter of funders for how open it is to ideas from grantees about its strategy
- in the top 15 percent of funders for how comfortable grantees feel approaching the foundation if a problem arises
- in the top 15 percent of funders for transparency about its experiences with what has not worked in past grantmaking
- in the top 10 percent of funders in terms of grant dollars awarded per hour invested in the application process
- in the top 10 percent of funders for how well the foundation understands the needs of the grantees’ intended beneficiaries.

The survey provided a needed wake-up call in other areas. For example, Tricia and Jeff saw that they were below average in the number of grantees receiving multi-year support. (One grantee commented, “While short-term investments can sometimes be sustained by other funders, more often they cannot. Many initiatives become one-hit wonders without a longer investment period.”) The foundation was also rated





Photo courtesy of the Raikes Foundation

below average on how well it communicates its goals and strategies with grantees. And the majority of grantees gave them low marks on the helpfulness of the reporting process.

Tricia, Jeff, and the team took the tough feedback to heart. They increased the number and percentage of multi-year grants—“allowing for longer time horizons and longer learning cycles,” in Tricia’s words.

They rewrote significant portions of their website and added communications capacity on staff and through consulting arrangements. They reviewed their reporting process and then decided to give more discretion to program officers in setting clear milestones/deliverables up front and using more-flexible reporting methods. “Most grantees have routine contact with their [program officer], so completing a standardized, grant-end report felt redundant and perfunctory,” explained Kahn. “We’ve reduced the reporting burden ... because we lean more on routine check-ins.”

Tricia and Jeff have committed to repeating the GPR in 2019.

## Applying the Growth Mindset: Strengthening Organizations

Tricia and Jeff made it clear that they’re invested in building strong relationships with grantees not to win a popularity contest but to earn trust and improve together.

“We don’t want to be accountability enforcers,” Kahn said. “We want to add intellectual value for our partners. We want to know their work and their fields well enough to be strategic partners.” Dr. Rabkin confirmed that the Raikes Foundation delivers on that promise. “Their whole orientation is on helping us improve,” he said. “When you apply [for a grant], they want to know: What will you learn? And how will that make you better?”

After helping grantees clarify the areas they want to improve, the foundation often helps the grantees gain exposure to “improvement science,” a discipline imported from the world of sophisticated healthcare institutions. “We help train our grantees in education and homelessness so that they can embed improvement science into their work,” Kahn said. “In most social-sector



fields, organizations throw a lot of solutions at the problem, and it's hard to determine what part worked. You never know what part is core and what part is peripheral. But if you use improvement science, you can be much more disciplined about designing and testing programs so you know what changes affect the outcomes you care about."

The Raikes emphasis on improvement science has not only helped individual grantees achieve better results; it's also helped foundation staff understand which organizations have a growth mindset—and which don't. "We discovered that some well-known organizations ... were [achieving] nothing at all for key subsets of kids," Kahn explained. "That fact was being obscured by the otherwise high caliber of their work." Some of these organizations showed that they were open to learning how they could improve their work for those who weren't benefiting. Some had the opposite reaction. "You can't foist [learning and improvement] on organizations. You can give them exposure and support. But

once you've done that, then the onus is on them."

Equal Opportunity Schools, which helps schools engage students of color and students from low-income backgrounds in Advanced Placement and other rigorous courses, is one of the organizations that has done the most to incorporate improvement science into its work. That's because the organization's leaders, as members of RF's [Building Equitable Learning Environments Network](#) (BELE), were able to learn about the methodology with a group of peer organizations and then go deep, on Raikes's dime, with experts such as [UChicago Consortium for School Research](#) and [Shift Results](#). "Thanks to **Lindsay [Hill]**, director of diversity, equity, and inclusion, Zoë, and [the experts they paid for], we were able to put together a new program model that made our work exponentially better than otherwise. Their formula is creativity and learning, in addition to the money," Dr. Rabkin explained.



To strengthen its grantees and their fields, Raikes also provides a lot of support for connecting the dots between organizations. In the words of an internal document, “We support capacity building, data systems, research, and other efforts that accelerate knowledge dissemination, connectivity, and coordination within fields and across disciplines.”

Embracing a field-building and systems-change orientation has required changes in each of the foundation’s program areas. In its youth-homelessness program, for example, it meant initially playing a “backbone role,” not just a grantmaker. “We asked, ‘Whose job is it to think about prevention and ending the crisis at a community level?,” Hong explained. “We realized no one was in that role.” So Jeff, Tricia, and their team stepped in to support this capacity and play the role of convener and catalyst—bringing together government leaders, business leaders, young people who have experienced homelessness, advocates, and service providers on an ongoing basis to engage in learning and problem solving together. “We’re very high-touch funders,” Hong said. “We aim to play a unique role that our grantees cannot, because we have access to certain funders and other community leaders. But we’re not the kind of funder who says, ‘We know, we’re the decision-makers, you have to run it all by us.’”

In education, embracing field building and systems change meant switching from supporting individual interventions to supporting the capacity builders and conditions that can support “equitable schools and systems.” Hill shared an example

of what that term means in practice. Prior to the foundation’s turn toward systems change, the foundation directed funding to a Stanford researcher to develop and study an online program to encourage growth mindsets in ninth graders. The intervention showed impressive results for a light-tough and low-cost intervention. Students at risk of leaving high school without a diploma were more likely to earn passing grades after engaging in a growth-mindset exercise at school.

And yet the foundation believed it could accomplish more by bringing intermediaries, schools, and districts together to see how they could introduce a holistic suite of changes, not just single interventions. That was the impetus that led to the BELE Network. “Our partners are working together across all the parts of the school and school day to build equity, inclusion, and belonging into their DNA—from how you can best use advisory time to the narrative presented in the curriculum to the discipline policies to the types of teachers schools hire,” Hill explained. “It’s about doing so in a way that’s not about ‘fixing’ young people but about removing barriers to their success.... We think of it as preventative medicine, rather than going to a doctor when you’re sick. When young people experience psychological safety—where their identities are affirmed, their learning is relevant..., and their voices are heard and elevated—they achieve at high levels.”



## Applying the Growth Mindset: Increasing Equity

Perhaps the most difficult and rewarding part of Tricia and Jeff's journey has been learning about privilege, including their own. In the words of grantee Dr. **Pamela Cantor**, the founder and senior science advisor of Turnaround for Children, "Tricia and Jeff Raikes are on a journey to know themselves and to deepen their learning about the world around them—especially about the inequities in the world, particularly for children of color. It's been an incredible journey, and they're making changes to their organization—putting equity at the center—and to their lives based on what they have learned."

Tricia and Jeff's introspection about privilege and race aren't driven by public relations or political correctness. It's driven by a desire to get better. According to Kahn, "We used to think that all boats would rise [if we funded] an effective program. But ... now see that many universal interventions work for those who are already doing well—not for those we really want to reach."

Jeff and Tricia give big credit to Hill and Dr. Stemm-Calderon for helping them "widen our aperture," in Tricia's words. One way they did so was to push Tricia and Jeff to see the ways in which growth-mindset interventions actually could be harmful for some of the young people they wanted to serve. "We saw one instance in which students received ... grades on whether they had a growth mindset or not," Hill recalled. "It's causing harm, especially for those who already have a sense that they don't belong. It's not helping to address the underlying problems that led to a fixed mindset. It's not changing the systems



**Tricia and Jeff Raikes are on a journey to know themselves and to deepen their learning.**



Dr. Pamela Cantor

and structures that contribute to a young person developing a fixed mindset."

Hong offered similar reflections from her work in youth homelessness. "When I started at the foundation, we ... said, 'We care about all kids.' But Tricia and Jeff ... learned that when you don't target young people who are farthest away from opportunity, you can reinforce and amplify the problem." Hong offered a concrete example. "We cannot end youth homelessness if we don't end it for LGBTQ youth, who make up 40 percent of the youth-homeless population. Imagine you're a gay young person, and you've been kicked out of your home. And ... you get put with a foster family that's not affirming and maybe even abusive. So what happens? You leave foster care and end up homeless." In other words, if you're blind to race and other forms of difference, you have little hope of being effective.

Insights like these led Tricia and Jeff to see the need to break out of their bubble. "We don't have the lived experience of people of color. But we committed to learning from those who do and to being good listeners," Tricia said.

In 2015, they asked staff to join them in shining a light on the blind spots that



Photo courtesy of Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

might be limiting the effectiveness of their work. They started with three days of deep training for the whole staff. “It was really a jarring experience for us and the staff,” Tricia acknowledged. “It was diving into the deep end before we were clear on how to tread water. There were moments that were uncomfortable for us, but we see that as a healthy thing. Without that, you can’t get to the next level of understanding.”

Hill saw the experience as transformative for the foundation. However, for some members of the staff, the discomfort led to resignations. “When you become clear on equity as a core value, there are some folks who may choose to leave the organization, who are uncomfortable with acknowledging the realities of oppression in our world and examining their own role in perpetuating injustice,” Hill said. In Jeff’s words, “They just weren’t comfortable with [us switching to] a laser-like focus on racial equity.”

Another important guide for Tricia, Jeff, and the staff was Berkeley Professor Powell. Tricia explained what she learned from him: “We were always for universal goals. John

helped us understand that we need to have targeted strategies for meeting them. We now see that the messages that kids of color get from teachers and administrators are often different [from what other kids get]. Because of implicit bias, these kids get discouraged. If you’re a black girl and you’re good in math, you might have to fight the administration to take the AP class. We met one student [of color] who showed up in an advanced class, and her teacher told her she was in the wrong class.”

When we spoke with Powell, he offered a sharp critique of elite philanthropists who give lip service to issues of race and diversity while nimbly sidestepping any discussion of the “oppressive, unequal systems and structures” that he believes to be at the root of the problem. “Funders often don’t want to hear about race or structures. And they certainly don’t want to hear a critique of funding itself.”

He said that Jeff and Tricia are among the very few donors willing to look at these issues head on. “I met Tricia first, at a community event, and I was really

impressed. She showed none of the usual hubris,” he said. “Tricia and Jeff had a narrow frame to start. But they’ve opened up. They care about social justice ... and not in a neutered way.... I asked their staff if they can criticize them. The staff said yes. I’ve been with other foundation staff, including from a very large foundation in Seattle, who say, ‘We can’t take this idea to [the donor], because he’ll knock it down.’ My sense is that Jeff and Tricia are not like that.”

As part of their equity journey, Tricia and Jeff have worked to increase the diversity of their staff, grantees, and those their grantees serve. “We realized that the recruiting firms we worked with didn’t have this expertise,” Tricia said. “We had to [pick new firms] to expand the recruiting repertoire. And then we created a staff committee to come up with new HR policies with an equity lens. That meant sharing power in new ways.”

For years, the foundation had just one African American staff member, and she had a brief tenure. In the past three years, the composition of the team has changed significantly. On a staff of 16, seven team

members are people of color, and three identify as LGBTQ. And they recently promoted Hill, who served at the foundation for several years in a program-officer role, to become the foundation’s first director of diversity, equity, and inclusion. “We have given Lindsay this role so she can hold us accountable,” said Tricia. They are looking for accountability not just on the diversity of the staff but also the foundation’s cultural climate. Numbers are one thing. An inclusive and welcoming climate is another.

The Raikes Foundation asks every grant applicant to answer the following questions:

- In what ways do the program/project lead(s) reflect the intended population served by this program/project?
- Who are the other partners contributing to this program/project? Please summarize their role and how they reflect the intended population served.

It also asks applicants to provide specific demographic data on its board, staff, and constituents. (See chart below.)

The Organization				Project/ Program
Board	Staff	People	People	
# of Board Members	# of Staff	# of People Served	# of People Served	
0	0	0	0	
Please Input Total Number				
Race and Ethnicity				
Asian/Asian American	0	0	0	
Black/African American	0	0	0	
Hispanic/Latino/Latina	0	0	0	
Native American/American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian	0	0	0	
White	0	0	0	
Multi-Race or Multi-Ethnic	0	0	0	
Other	0	0	0	
Total (Auto Calculated)			0	
			# People Served by Org	# People Served by Project/Program
Please Input Total Number				
Gender Identity				
Female			0	0
Male			0	0
Transgender/Nonconforming			0	0
Sexual Orientation				
Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual/Queer			0	0
Disability Status				
Persons with Disabilities			0	0
Income Status				
Low Income/Free or Reduced Lunch			0	0
Housing/Shelter Status				
Foster Care			0	0
Homeless or Unstably Housed Youth			0	0



While Jeff, Tricia, and the staff considered these questions a step in the right direction, they have also come to realize they are insufficient for getting a nuanced understanding of race, power, and privilege at their partner organizations. In 2018, the Raikes Foundation piloted a much more rigorous survey with the majority of their education grantees and took the survey themselves. The results are allowing them to have more effective conversations with grantees, provide more effective support for grantees, and develop better ways of making sure the foundation's own team practices what it preaches.

## Applying a Growth Mindset: Strengthening Philanthropy

As Tricia and Jeff have worked to apply a growth mindset to their own philanthropy, they have also thought about how to encourage other philanthropists to do the same. In 2016, they launched their [Impact-Driven Philanthropy Initiative](#) (IDPI) with the goal of helping “more donors give more dollars to do the most good.”

From 1889, when Andrew Carnegie published [The Gospel of Wealth](#), to 2010, when Bill and Melinda Gates and Warren Buffett launched [The Giving Pledge](#), wealthy donors have sought to influence their peers to give more generously. But given how personal and idiosyncratic philanthropy usually is, shifting donors' mindsets has proven to be very difficult.

In the years leading up to The Giving Pledge, the Gates Foundation contemplated launching with four pillars: Give big. Give smart. Give now. Give to inequities. But the foundation chose to focus on the first part of the formulation. “Warren [Buffett] told me, ‘I don’t like being preached to. I don’t like to preach to others.’ He felt the other three [elements] smacked of potential preaching,” Jeff explained.

Jeff told us that he understands and appreciates Buffett’s concern, but he and Tricia have chosen to have a wider focus for IDPI. “We want to try to make a broad contribution to [other donors] raising their impact. The bulk of our giving is for specific issues—like education and youth homelessness. But IDP is our way of trying to gain leverage from what we and others have learned; raise the effectiveness of the philanthropic sector; and draw others into a deeper understanding of race and social justice.”

The first public manifestation of the foundation’s drive to encourage impact-driven philanthropy is the [Giving Compass](#) website, which draws 25,000 to 30,000 user sessions each month. As Tricia and Jeff shared with the Microsoft Alumni Network in 2018, “Giving Compass was launched in partnership with others in the field of philanthropy to put in one place the best of what we know about how to give with impact.”

Behind the scenes, Tricia, Jeff, and their team have been working with outside experts from foundations, academia, and donor-education groups to codify the key principles

and practices of “impact-driven philanthropy” and identify strategies for working in direct ways with “the people who aspire to learn from others,” in Jeff’s words. The principles and practices, much like the rest of Tricia and Jeff’s work, will evolve as the group learns.

“We’re learning new things every day about how to be effective,” noted Jeff. “If we can help others do the same, the world will be better off.”

## Conclusion

Today, Tricia and Jeff Raikes have both wealth and privilege. They have chosen to invest both in their drive to improve the institutions that serve young people, particularly those who have been underserved. “Privilege in and of itself is not a problem,” Powell said. “It’s how you use privilege. Do you think it’s yours and hoard it for yourself? Or do you use it to promote something that’s larger than oneself?”

In working to improve education, end youth homelessness, and strengthen giving, Tricia and Jeff have practiced what their grantees

have preached about the power of the growth mindset. They’ve worked to build trusted relationships with grantees and minimize the pernicious power imbalance. They’ve listened to grantees who asked them to move away from one-time gifts and overly prescriptive grant processes. They’ve helped encourage and support their grantees to learn and improve. They’ve provided grantees with expertise and introductions that go well beyond the value of the check. They’re examining their blind spots and broadening their perspectives on race—even when that’s pushed them beyond their comfort zone. They’ve started engaging their peers in their journey, sharing candidly what’s worked and what hasn’t in their own work and what they hope the philanthropic sector could achieve through a greater focus on effectiveness.

In the words of Carol Dweck’s seminal book [Mindset: The New Psychology of Success](#), “Every day presents you with ways to grow and help the people you care about grow.” Tricia and Jeff are taking that wisdom to mind and heart.

We’re trying to walk the talk on feedback to make our resources for funders more relevant and useful, and we don’t want to put words in your mouth! Please take a minute to share your thoughts on this Funding Performance profile by taking our short survey:

<http://bit.ly/GrowthMindsetFeedback>



The Nunn and Raikes families celebrate the 2016 graduation of Foluke Nunn and Gillian Raikes. Featured from left to right: Tricia Hilliard-Nunn, Foluke Nunn, Gillian Raikes, Kenneth Nunn, Jeff Raikes, Michaela Raikes, Connor Raikes. Photo courtesy of the Raikes Foundation.