By coincidence, six days after the Russian invasion of Ukraine on February 24, the FPP senior cohort met for its regular monthly session. The teens were in the finishing stages of their 9-month long capital campaign to raise money for next year’s grant making, a sizable goal since $75,000 was distributed this year! Normally, nothing could distract these amazing teens from their goal, but then nothing like Russia’s war and displacement of millions of Ukrainians ever happened, at least not since World War II. At that session, the question was asked: What can we do?

The answer came quickly and snowballed over the ensuing weeks to become the “Ukraine Aid Project.” The students knew they could raise money, but they felt they could do more. Collecting items that could be directly donated to the refugees would have a greater impact, they felt. A major part of that plan consisted of finding a corporate partner who would co-brand the collection effort with FPP. In a short period of time, actually 10 minutes after being asked, Pete’s Market confirmed that they would serve as the sponsor. Through their partnership, FPP opened a critical giving opportunity for the entire community by engaging people who also wanted to do something to help.

Ukraine Aid took place on April 14-16 at Pete’s store in Oak Park. On those days, shoppers were greeted at the door by FPP teens who gave them a list of items that are in great need to Ukrainian refugees such as soap, toothpaste, toothbrushes, diapers, baby products, feminine hygiene items, first aid/medical

More than 3,500 pounds of goods were donated and approximately $5,500 in cash.

CLICK HERE TO VIEW THE FULL INTERVIEW
video courtesy of CBS2 Chicago

Chris Hedrich, FPP ‘22 and Wendy Will, mentor, give live WBBM-TV interview.

continued next page
products, school supplies and more. Shoppers who added these items to their shopping list then donated them upon exiting the store. Many shoppers also gave cash donations which will help to defray the cost of air transport to Ukraine for distribution to the women, children and elderly who have been forced from their homes with virtually nothing.

All totaled, more than 3,500 pounds of goods were donated and approximately $5,500 in cash was contributed.

FPP juniors joined the seniors in this effort along with relatives and school friends as well as the 10 FPP mentors and numerous other adult volunteers. The fact that none of the FPP students (not to mention adults) has ever done anything like this before did not dissuade them. It took organization, teamwork, critical thinking and collaboration skills to put this together. But that is what FPP is all about: teaching the art, science and business of philanthropy to the next generation of community leaders. Instilling a philanthropic mindset in their formative years is a major objective of the program and the result of the Ukraine Aid Project is a significant example of the kind of social action teens can take to do good.
The FPP junior and senior cohorts were honored to have Dr. Elivra Kizilova and her 14 year-old son, Artem, as guest speakers at their April meetings. Dr. Kizilova was born in Crimea and worked in Ukraine before relocating to Dominican University to be an Assistant Professor of Marketing and International Business at the Brennan School of Business. She witnessed the Russian occupation of Crimea in 2014 and had to leave due to her pro-Ukrainian position. Artem is a freshman at OPRF High School.

Dr. Kizilova provided both a historic and current picture of Ukraine. With the fall of the former U.S.S.R. in 1991, Ukraine became an independent country. It grew to become one of the world’s most prosperous agricultural exporters of such products as sunflowers and sunflower oil (#1 in the world), potatoes (#3), barley and rye (#4) and wheat exports (#5). Eight years ago, Russia occupied Crimea and parts of the eastern Ukraine regions of Donetsk and Luhansk. This led up to the February 24 invasion by Russia and the displacement to 12 million Ukraine citizens including more than 4 million refugees who have fled to Poland and other European countries. Besides the humanitarian crisis caused by Putin’s war, the world-wide economic effects of the invasion will be felt for years to come, she said.

Dr. Kizilova also shared her concerns for her own family members, including her mother, who with Elvira’s help, recently relocated to the Chicago area. That emotional moment was accompanied by a few tears shed by FPP students and mentors alike.

Elvira Kizilova, Ph.D.

Elvira Kizilova is an Assistant Professor of Marketing and International Business at Brennan School of Business. She received her Ph.D. degree at West Virginia University. In addition, Elvira holds M.P.A degrees from the University of Arkansas and Odessa Regional Institute of Public Administration Under the President of Ukraine.

Prior to pursuing a doctoral degree, Elvira worked for the Ministry of Health Resorts and Tourism of Crimea, Ukraine. She also was a local expert of technical assistance programs, such as USAID LINK, USAID BIZPRO, and European Union Project “Crimean Tourism Diversification and Support” and received an award from the USAID|BIZPRO Program for the active participation in BIZPRO projects and initiatives, significant contribution to the development of travel industry of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, and promotion of national tourism products of Ukraine to the local and international markets.

Elvira witnessed the Russian occupation of Crimea in 2014 and helped international media, such as NPR, BBC, BFM-TV, etc., to cover these events. She had to leave Crimea for her active pro-Ukrainian position but continues to actively support the Ukrainian community.

Artem Kizilov

Artem is Elvira’s son. He is a freshman at Oak Park and River Forest High School. Artem was born in Crimea, Ukraine. He likes computer science and wants to be a programmer.

UKRAINE FACTS

- Began its modern history in 1991 as an independent country after the fall of U.S.S.R
- Has a long history of resistance to Russian/Soviet repression
- 2nd largest country by area in Europe after Russia
- Population 45 million
- 4.3 million children have been displaced from their homes
- Gross Domestic Product: $156 billion
- Since February 24, 11 million people have been displaced within Ukraine
FPP In the News

Grace Derks, FPP Class of 2018 and a soon-to-be graduate of Fordham University in New York City, was featured in the Fordham Ram, the University’s newspaper, regarding her work on the Humanitarian Student Union (HSU) where she serves as president. Most recently, Grace and members of HSU launched a fundraising campaign to raise money for Ukraine refugees. Funds raised for this purpose were donated to two international organizations with a history of aiding people displaced by war and other catastrophic events: Direct Relief and People in Need. Read more about Grace's work here:

Humanitarian Student Union Launches Ukrainian Relief Fundraiser – The Fordham Ram

Zach Ellis, FPP Class of 2023, was interviewed by the Wednesday Journal during Black History Month in February in which he described OPRF’s Spirit Week sponsored by members of the Black Leaders Union (BLU) where he serves as president. The weeklong event included a series of activities for students, teachers and administrators in which Black athletes, writers, activists and social change leaders were recognized in inventive ways. Read more about Zach's leadership in BLU here:

https://www.oakpark.com/2022/03/22/spirit-week-adds-dimension-to-black-history-month/

Alumni Updates

Lizzy Mavrogenes, FPP ’13

The older I get, the more I appreciate the adage that “time is more valuable than money.” In all facets of my life, this rings true. My most cherished memories are experiences with many of my favorite people: wandering the streets of Paris on a cold November day shopping with my mom, walking down any of the thousands of holes of golf I’ve played with my dad, screaming Maroon 5 lyrics at their concert with friends.

I’ve also had the chance to dedicate time to others—people whose stories I don’t know, people who have struggled to an extent I will never understand, and those have been equally memorable and exceedingly gratifying. In between participating in FPP in High School, I spent both my Junior and Senior year spring breaks in New Orleans on a mission trip. While I was learning about different charitable organizations, how to write grants, and awarding thousands of dollars to charities in my community with FPP, I also got to be in the thick of it at shelters in the lower 9th ward serving warm meals, painting schools, and meeting people whose lives were destroyed by recent hurricanes. As an intern for the Make-A-Wish Foundation in Washington DC, I spent countless weekend mornings at Reagan Airport, balloons and signs in hand, sending kids off to Disney, Hawaii, and on cruises. In college, I participated in the Polar Plunge, walked with sorority sisters in support of JDRF, and went trick-or-treating for canned goods every Halloween with my golf team.

I have continued to serve diverse communities in different ways, and the most important things I’ve learned are the value of hearing stories, changing lives (including your own), working hard, and making a difference.
Alumni Updates – continued

Dan Brangle, FPP ’18

After graduating from OPRF (and FPP) in 2018, I packed my bags and drove a whopping two hours to South Bend, Indiana. I’m now a Senior studying Finance and History, and I could not be happier with my past four years at Notre Dame. Like FPP, Notre Dame focuses on finding the intersection between your actions and values. As a result, I joined clubs like Best Buddies and College Mentors for Kids — both of which aim to connect students with people in the community. I’ve been a part of charity fundraising efforts within and outside of my dorm. I’ve protested the lack of LGBTQ acceptance within the Church. Still, the reality is that my actions have only scratched the surface. There’s no shortage of injustice and people who need help in the world, and both FPP and Notre Dame have taught me how important it is to be a force for good. As I wrap up my final semester, I am overwhelmed with gratitude for the opportunity to study here; there’s a sense of responsibility to take what I’ve learned these past years and use it to benefit others. Though I’m not quite sure what that looks like now, I hope to find a meaningful way to contribute sometime soon. For now, my next step is starting full-time as an Investment Analyst for Maranon Capital — a private credit firm in Chicago. There I look to develop professionally and continue acting in conjunction with my values.

Peyton Olszowka, FPP ’18

Participating in FPP was such a formative experience for me. Over the course of my time at Boston College, I’ve had ample opportunity to draw upon the skills I cultivated as a member of FPP. At BC, I sit on the board of the Eagle Institute, which is a nonprofit organization that utilizes Model United Nations tools to educate Boston-area middle and high schoolers about current events and civic activism. When I was tasked with leading the Institute’s fundraising efforts this past year, I returned to the lessons I learned in FPP my senior year, and was ultimately successful in raising enough to keep the organization afloat after COVID-19 dealt us some serious blows.

I feel very fortunate to have been a member of FPP! As I approach my graduation in May and am interviewing for jobs in the nonprofit sector, I am confident that I will continue to draw upon the philanthropic literacy and professional skills I developed in the Program.

Harper Lane, FPP ’17

Since graduating from OPRF, and leaving the Future Philanthropists Program, I have graduated from Washington University in St. Louis with majors in Political Science and American Culture Studies. I started my academic career pretty confident that I would pursue a life in the political arena. I even interned for Senator Durbin two summers in a row. However, the role didn’t give me the sense of satisfaction that I was expecting and that my law classes did. After graduating college, I landed in the United States Attorney’s Office for the Southern District of New York as a paralegal. Specifically, I am working in the Civil Frauds Unit with a team of hardworking individuals seeking justice under the False Claims Act and other methods of correcting Federal financial awards. I was prepared well, as FPP showed me several examples of groups and individuals who are truly deserving of a helping hand. I have felt so gratified in my role at the US Attorney’s Office because I have seen my efforts working to correct misuse and misallocation of federal funds — funds that are intended to help people. FPP was one of many organizations throughout my time at OPRF that exposed me to a wide variety of people and organizations that for want of a relatively small amount of money could accomplish really great things. It taught me the value of philanthropy and the important role nonprofit organizations play in our society. It was these lessons that have led me to guide my career with a sense of justice and have shown me that true fulfillment comes from helping the right people get good work done.

As I look ahead in my own future, planning to pursue a J.D. in the next two years, I know that this sense of justice will always guide my path. This drive is in large part due to my experiences in FPP. Getting to do site visits and hear real grant proposals from such deserving groups as Hephzibah and Housing Forward are memories that will stay with me forever. Even in the darkest of times, nonprofit organizations are always working behind the scenes to correct inequalities and help our communities. The greatest joys of my academic and professional career thus far have come from seeing my efforts go towards similar goals, and for that I have FPP to thank. To any future FPP graduates, I encourage you to take these experiences with you to college and beyond, you will never regret fighting the good fight.
The paradoxical relationship between impatience and empathy has been blatantly exposed during this Pandemic Era. On the road the person who blows the horn because you did not start driving at the split second the light turns green shares the highway with the person who stops to let the person pushing the baby stroller across the street. The question becomes which one do you want to be?

This is not to say that there is no place for anger in a life well lived. I am still angry with Pete Rose for having bet on baseball. It is when anger turns to rage that the floodgates which release poor judgement, imprudent action and regret open widely.

On the other hand, kindness in the form of the simple social courtesies is more akin to the waters that fertilize a garden. Have you noticed in the time of masks how many people smile with their eyes? It is the fool who mistakes kindness for weakness. Kindness expressed in words and actions is the belief that the future can be better, and I can help make it so. After all isn’t that why you became a Future Philanthropist?

Make it a habit. Charles Duhigg, the author of The Power of Habit, writes: “Starting your day by making your bed can create chain reactions that help other good habits take hold.” Excellence is the result of good habits exercised with integrity. If you touch a simple task with that mantra in mind, imagine what remarkable things you can accomplish.

As we experience the dysfunction, uncertainty, and confusion of these times of trouble that are known as the “Pandemic Era,” coming home to a made bed can help make the successes of the day more gratifying and the frustrations less irritating. You started the day and finished the day in control of something.

We will always be your mentors.

"Hope has two beautiful daughters. Their names are anger and courage; anger at the way things are, and courage to see that they do not remain the way they are."

– St. Augustine
Why is philanthropy important? For all the reasons we know and understand - helping others, giving back, sharing our gifts of time and talent and providing invaluable resources to non-profits to further their missions. While my full-time job is running a non-profit youth service organization, I know that I still have something to offer and I have chosen to do so with FPP, the next generation of philanthropists. I have been in youth services for over 25 years and FPP just seemed like the perfect opportunity to stay connected to young people, outside of work.

Why do I spend my time as a mentor in FPP? It’s simple. I want to ensure that the future of philanthropy is strong by spending time educating and sharing my experiences with the next generation. An important part of the FPP experience is the site visits to non-profits. I really like to share what it feels like for a non-profit when they are being considered for a grant from a foundation. There is apprehension - what questions will they ask, will we say the right things, will we make a good impression

Non-profits work hard every day navigating a very complex system with foundations, government entities, individual donors, elected officials, neighborhood politics, reporting and of course, service delivery. While site visits are not necessarily new to non-profits, they can induce a level of anxiety. I share this with my team cohort so they understand that while they are nervous about meeting non-profit leaders and asking them questions, there is a shared anxiety between them. Both parties want the visit to go great. And, in my experience, they always do!

After the site visits, I also try to “translate” between what they heard during the visit and what they are grappling with to understand. The non-profit community has its own vernacular and seasoned grant makers understand it. I provide this understanding to our FPP youth. Lastly, I enjoy watching their excitement and energy gleaned from these site visits! They are truly impacted by what they have learned from them. It also adds a new perspective on their own lives, shaping their view of the world and their responsibility in it.

I am grateful to share space with this wonderful group of young people and mentors who are dedicated to making the world better!

For the past 7 years, Adam has been the Executive Director of BUILD, a 50-year old youth development organization located in the Austin neighborhood. In 2002, he founded and served as the first executive director of Corazon Community Services serving the Berwyn/Cicero area. He has a Master of Social Work degree from Loyola Chicago and a BA in Latin American Studies from the University of Chicago. Adam is an adjunct professor at Northeastern Illinois University and has been an FPP mentor for the past 4 years.

Corporate Social Responsibility

Excerpted from PNC Insights, 12/28/2021

Q: “While corporate responsibility is re-emerging, how long do you anticipate it will take before corporate giving returns to pre-pandemic levels?”

A: Several factors influence corporate philanthropy including U.S. Gross Domestic Product (GDP), market conditions, and the regulatory environment. GDP and corporate pre-tax profits both decreased in 2020 and may have influenced the 6.1 percent decrease in corporate giving reported by Giving USA. If history is an indicator, 2021’s positive GDP and corporate pre-tax profit growth should bode well for an increase in giving. We are also seeing an increase in the formalization of giving programs at many corporations. This includes the creation of corporate foundations and corporate donor advised fund programs. These actions may result in a more stable funding pool for qualified charitable recipients. Note that philanthropy is only one component of corporate social responsibility (CSR). CSR also comes in the form of diversity, equity and inclusion programs, volunteerism, and environmental impact.
Reaching Consensus by Inventing More Options
by Zeke Wells, FPP ’23

In Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving by Roger Fisher and William Ury, the authors describe how to rethink the negotiation process in order to have a more mutually beneficial outcome. They discuss the importance of avoiding premature judgment and bias by “separating the process of thinking up possible decisions from the process of selecting among them.” The authors believe that it is important to let the imagination flow in the brainstorming process without the impediment of premature conclusions. By letting the ideas come into the conversation without any quick reactions that restrict the flow of ideas, the parties can function more effectively and might come up with an unexpectedly good idea.

Ury and Fisher make the claim that not every negotiation is what they call a “fixed pie”. By saying this, they mean that it is possible for both sides to expand the scope of what they can achieve by thinking outside of the box. In a negotiation, one’s gain doesn’t always have to come at the other’s expense. The authors call for a broader view in negotiation, saying that, “room can be made only by having a substantial number of markedly different ideas.” They argue that only by having a plethora of different ideas can a negotiation emerge with a satisfying result.

During our discussions about making grants to local nonprofits, it was necessary to apply Ury and Fisher’s knowledge. We had nearly $175,000 in requests for funding and we only had $50,000 to give out in grants. Each individual might naturally get attached to their own ideas of where the money should go which would disrupt the consensus building process. So after we narrowed down number of applicant in two rounds of negotiating, we were asked to propose Alternative Options for cutting the grants down to the final $50,000. From this reading, I learned that this was a crucial step. It was necessary for everyone to have a voice in proposing any and all alternative solutions before debating which of those options was the best. Given the high stakes of this grantmaking and its potential impact, it turned out that this process led to a successful conclusion.

By far the most important takeaway from the reading was that in a negotiation, one’s gain doesn’t have to come at the other’s expense. There isn’t always a fixed pie. Although at first it can seem like one thing must be subtracted from the other, the reading showed that creative problem solving can create a bigger pie, in other words, many solutions.

Inventing a wide range of possible solutions to a decision-making process is necessary for success.

The Nonprofit Starvation Cycle
by Jeet Chugh, FPP ’23

Unrealistic expectations can often derail if not kill the growth of business. This can be seen when corporations push too hard to report profits and in turn cut corners. Similarly, this principle can be observed in nonprofit organizations as well.

In The Nonprofit Starvation Cycle, an article written by Ann Gregory and Don Howard and published in the Stanford Social Innovation Review, the authors explain how many nonprofits are often unable to reach their full potential and impact due to the unrealistic expectations of funders. One of the most important topics in the article is the preoccupation of funders with overhead and infrastructure costs and why this is counterproductive to nonprofits in building higher program capacity. A consequence of these low overhead expectations creates an environment that is not conducive to growth.

When I originally skimmed through the article, I was quickly able to pick up on the main points thanks to an accompanying graphic of the “The Starvation Cycle.” I had previously been blind to the pressure that nonprofits face to utilize every penny from their funders for direct service delivery. The question in our group discussion was, “Why do you think funders prefer lower overhead costs?” This question, albeit obvious, was thought provoking and led to a great discussion regarding the impact of funders expectations to keep overhead low.

Funders often believe that any money spent within the nonprofit is money wasted. Additionally, regardless of the impact, funders are more likely to favor a nonprofit with low overhead and low expectations than one with higher overhead and higher impact. But investment in technology, financial management, fundraising, staff training and facility improvements (all considered overhead) are crucial for growth.

Setting realistic expectations is a step in the right direction for many nonprofits that suffer with low growth. An article similar to The Nonprofit Starvation Cycle is Are Your Fundraising Expectations Unrealistic?, by Elise Saltzberg. The author details more consequences of unrealistic expectations including high turnover and inadequate marketing/fundraising. It also discusses potential methods for diagnosing the gaps in nonprofit fundraising.

Overall, The Nonprofit Starvation Cycle article was incredibly informative about the ways nonprofits are put into positions of low growth through the unrealistic expectations of its funders. It also taught me that there are many steps a nonprofit can take to ensure that funders understand the need to optimize overhead by educating donors and being transparent with them. When a donor is informed about the financial backend of a nonprofit, they are more likely to entrust them and stand by the quality of their work.