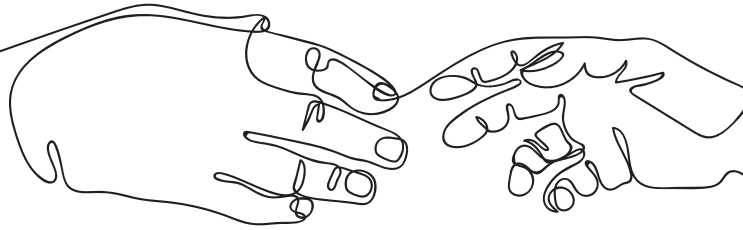


Future Philanthropists Program is an educational program supported by the Oak Park-River Forest Community Foundation



# social justice

## Editor's Note

"Why is it that every day it feels like my house is on fire?" My wife, Cheryl, dropped that on me a couple of weeks ago after watching one of the major network's nightly news broadcasts. It covered the latest unsuccessful efforts to stop the spread of the coronavirus, an update on the record number of claims filed for unemployment benefits – 30 million total so far, a segment on why the Dems and GOP are unable to reach a consensus to continue federal relief assistance, and a report on the controversy surrounding the re-opening of schools vs online instruction. If that were not enough, in the aftermath of George Floyd's tragic death as a result of excessive force by police, the broadcast concluded with a piece on the hundreds of demonstrations across the country that are focused on the racial divide and social injustices that continue to tear at our democratic fabric.

It has been difficult for many of us to avoid feelings of panic or fear about what is currently happening in this country. As adults, the enormous changes to our daily lives have stressed out even the most optimistic among us. So, imagine how our "new normal" world must feel like to a teenager or a recent college graduate. They are, as we say, our best hope for the future. After all, they are Generation Z, the most diverse, well-educated and inclusive generation yet to come along. What are their thoughts about the social impact of all of this? We decided to ask them.

In this issue of the FPP Post, we are pleased to publish several articles on social justice written by current FPP students and recent FPP alumni: Esteban Linarez, JoJo Desir, Charlie Lemke-Bell and Jack Lewis. We asked them to choose one specific aspect on that topic, one about which they are particularly passionate. We asked them to speak their mind and to incorporate their real-life experiences to the degree they felt comfortable. They completed their articles last month and they appear together in this issue. I hope you find them as inspiring as I did and convinced that FPP is helping to prepare these future philanthropic leaders to make a difference in our community and in the world. They give me solace that, sometime in the future, it will not feel like every day our house is on fire.



Rick King, FPP Director

## Immigration: A Personal Perspective

by Esteban Linarez, FPP '21



In light of the social justice movement of Black Lives Matter and the fight to end police brutality, protests are currently underway in hopes to end systemic racism. Change is being demanded and it needs to happen now. One of the many issues that fall under the systematic racism umbrella that we should consider

is a change to our immigration policy. For the first 100 years of the United States, our nation had an "open immigration policy" that welcomed anyone from anywhere to come to this country. As more immigrants came to America from Latin America, Asia, Africa, or Europe, Americans became more hostile towards them because they did not share the same skin color. As a result, our system began to tighten immigration laws, which led to racism and the creation of immigration enforcement agencies and stricter customs. We should be more accepting of immigrants coming to our country because they do not have the same great opportunities in their homeland that we have here in the U.S. They simply want a better life for their families and themselves. Through research and some of my personal family stories, I would like to share why we should be pro-immigration. It's time that we debunk some of the myths about immigration.

There are some Americans who feel that immigration causes a negative impact in our society because some immigrants don't want to adapt to American customs or their way of life. Immigrants love to celebrate and preserve their customs and culture. Diversity should be celebrated, instead of shunned. One common misconception about immigrants is that they often take away jobs from Americans. The truth is, they actually create jobs. Immigrants contribute a great deal to the U.S. economy. According to an economic analysis by UC Davis, "51% of one billion-dollar startups have at least one immigrant founder and 43% of Forbes 500 companies were founded by immigrants or their children." This country's economy is dependent on immigrants, and if we opt for antagonistic measures, we could slow down our economic

continued next page

## Immigration: A Personal Perspective – continued

activity and potentially cause a recession or even a depression. Immigrants come here mostly because they want to improve their livelihoods. They tend to be highly ambitious, determined, resilient and this is the bedrock that founded this great country.

Another misconception about immigrants is that they bring more crime and wreak havoc. According to the National Bureau of Economic Research, "In 2000, immigrants only accounted for one-fifth of crimes committed compared to native-born Americans."

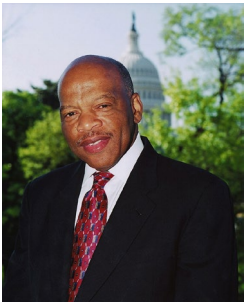
One reason for crime rates being low among immigrants is that they are focused on supporting their families and their well being; therefore working long hours since most do manual labor.

There are several reasons to be pro-immigrants. As humans, we should be kind and compassionate towards one another. We should all learn and be uplifting to people of different cultures and backgrounds. We set a precedent for immigration in the past and we need to strive to go back to what it used to be and retain it. The citizens of the United States should feel sympathetic towards those who do not have the same opportunities to succeed in their native places because of the lack of government stability or soaring crime rates that compromise their safety and that of their families. Immigrants are grateful to be here and want to contribute to their/our

society in a positive fashion socially, politically, economically, or culturally. For hundreds of years, we had people migrating from different parts of the world because they saw opportunities that they couldn't obtain in their native country. The United States was founded by immigrants. Let's not forget that these immigrants came here because it was the "land of the free" and the land of opportunity. If you believe that immigration is bad policy, then you must know, without immigrants, our America would not exist as we know it today.

Like many, I have a personal story about immigration and my family. My grandparents emigrated from Mexico through the Bracero Program. Bracero in Spanish means "manual laborer" or "one who works with his/her arms." This program was created because of an agreement made during World War II by the U.S and the Mexican government in order to combat labor shortages for low paying agricultural jobs in the U.S. In the southwestern United States, my grandfather's job was to do hard manual labor such as picking fruits and vegetables or building railroads in extremely hot climates. My grandparents eventually settled in Chicago with hopes of giving their 13 children a better life. My grandfather took a custodial job at a department store and my grandmother worked as a homemaker caring for 13 children. They even shared their apartment

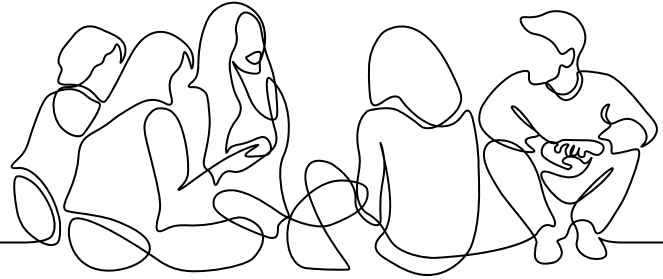
with fellow immigrants from the same village. My grandparents settled in the southwest side of Chicago in a neighborhood known today as Little Village. Little Village is a vibrant predominantly Mexican immigrant community with an entrepreneurial spirit. Unfortunately, after so many years their residents continue to suffer from gang violence and poverty. My parents were both born and raised there. My aunts, uncles, and parents understood the sacrifices my grandparents made, so they helped shoulder the financial burden by working at the early age of 6-10 years old. They learned the value of hard work, family, and responsibility from my grandparents. With these principles, they later ventured into starting their own businesses. My immigrant family consists of entrepreneurs such as my parents, uncles, aunts, and cousins who all started their own businesses: grocery stores, restaurants, laundromats, travel agencies, gas stations, real estate, accounting firms, and even a sleep disorders clinic here in Oak Park. They all practice philanthropy and continue to give back to their communities. They support several charitable causes in Chicagoland and even in other countries. I am very proud of them as they pushed through adversity and adapted to challenging situations. This is the same great story of many immigrants in the U.S.



"What I tell young people is that if you come together with a mission, and it's grounded with love and a sense of community, you can make the impossible possible".

*John Lewis, American Statesman  
and Civil Rights Leader*





# In Defense of “Listening and Learning”



by JoJo Desir, FPP '20

When Rick initially asked me in July if I would be interested in writing a brief article for the FPP newsletter on a social justice topic of my choosing,

I was thrilled. I had—and still have—so many opinions. But as soon as I sat down to write, it was like every idea I had evaporated. Sure, I thought, I had strong opinions, but which ones were most important for me to share? Besides, which ones were I even qualified to write about? I'm an expert on absolutely nothing! I could have written something reflecting on my own experiences regarding race or gender, but the myriad of privileges I hold—I may not be white or male, but I have economic privilege, cisgender privilege, able-bodied privilege, and many more—made me hesitant to write an article focusing on my personal experience. Overall, something felt wrong about me being given a platform to share my thoughts when so many others with backgrounds similar to mine already have that platform, even if they are often a few years older than myself. What really needs to be done is for other voices, voices of people who are often not heard, to be given more room.

And that's when it finally hit me. Since this article was a chance for me to share my opinion, I decided to share one piece of advice—aside from “wear a mask and socially distance”—I wish I could give to everyone. Here it is: listen, really listen, to people different from yourself.

I know, as some of you might, that the phrase “listening and learning” has become a bit jaundiced in certain circles, characterized as something privileged people claim to be doing as a way to avoid actually taking action to stop injustice. But in my opinion, actual listening and learning, not the cop-out version, can be revolutionary.

I believe actual listening and learning requires follow-up. For example, if you read an article in which you learned about an important issue, you could save it to re-read later and look for more resources on that issue. If someone in your life mentions something important you didn't know, you could ask more about it or make a mental note to research it later. But most importantly, once you're informed about an issue, do something! It can be as small as signing an online petition, or as big as starting a fundraising or letter-writing campaign. Not only is actually taking action about an issue crucial to creating change, but I have also found that, at least for me personally, it helps me feel less sad and powerless about problems in the world.

Aside from listening followed by action, it is also important our listening includes diverse voices. We need to listen to people whose opinions we disagree with. We need to listen to people whose opinions we don't understand. We need to listen to people whose identities we don't understand because we lack knowledge about them. I mentioned earlier that I have privilege in some ways and lack it in others. The same is true of everyone else: everyone is privileged in some ways and non-privileged in others. People joke about how white men have all the power, but reality is far more nuanced than that. We can all stand to learn from people whose experiences differ from ours.

There are still forms of bigotry in the Oak Park and River Forest communities which have yet to be rooted out and examined, no matter how accepting we claim to be. The type and severity of prejudice deemed “socially acceptable” varies from setting to setting and social circle to social circle, but it is there in each of them. When we listen to those different from us, we need to include listening to people we stigmatize most in our minds. Maybe we won't end up changing some (or any) of the beliefs we have, and sometimes that's okay. What's important is we keep our minds open

so we can become kinder, more empathetic, and more social-justice oriented people.

Two final disclaimers: first, it is important to seek out existing content created by people of diverse identities. Don't ask people to educate you if they have not offered, as it can be time-consuming and draining for them. Instead, use Google!

Second disclaimer: I know nowadays we all are bombarded constantly by media. It can be overwhelming and exhausting, and yes, diversifying the sorts of content you consume can sometimes lead to more content to consume, which the last thing anyone needs right now. However, there are tips to minimize being overwhelmed. First of all, there's nothing wrong with taking a break from time to time. If you are able to do so, you could take some time off from news and/or social media by avoiding it for a few days or however long you need to recharge. Alternately, you could limit the amount of time you spent consuming news and social media every day—say, to thirty minutes or however long works for you. You could also focus more in-depth on just a few issues that are important to you—especially ones you are able to do the most about—and less in-depth on others. And finally, listening to diverse voices doesn't just mean diverse sources of nonfiction information on social justice issues. An easy way to diversify the type of content you consume is by diversifying the type of entertainment you consume: seeking out fiction, movies, or TV shows created by and/or relating to stories of people who are different from you.

So yes, while the phrase itself may be unpopular, there is still something to be said for true listening and learning. Listening and learning about social justice issues is certainly not everything that needs to be done, but in my opinion, it's an excellent start.

# Breaking the Oak Park Bubble



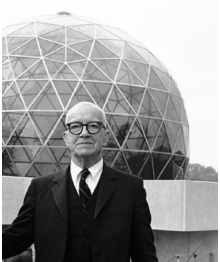
by Charlie Lemke-Bell, FPP '19

There are many advantages to living and growing up here in Oak Park. One realizes this quickly when they leave for college; it is at that turning point in our lives when we see just how unique and special our community is. For many Oak Parkers, this uniqueness translates into a sense of pride to call Oak Park home. So often when an Oak Parker is asked what they love

about living in Oak Park, they mention the beautiful tree-lined streets, the historic nature of the town, or the proximity to downtown Chicago and all it has to offer. However, when an Oak Parker is asked what they don't like about Oak Park, they mention its proximity to "those neighborhoods". We all know what neighborhoods that Oak Parker is talking about, they are the socio-economically distressed minority communities that surround much of Oak Park.

Growing up in northeast Oak Park, I was conscious from a young age of the stigma that exists for the section of Oak Park which lies east of Ridgeland Avenue. For many Oak Parkers, east Oak Park is just too close to "those neighborhoods". Folks may use excuses like "busy Austin Boulevard", "decreased property values" and "denser living conditions", but in my opinion, we are long overdue at unpacking what this really connotes and implies. This commitment to analyzing our fears, implicit biases, and yes, even our frank prejudices, requires both personal and community reflection. This work can be uncomfortable and difficult to commit to. And the process of self-reflection and scrutiny should be a constant effort with continuous investment. Yet I promise that you and Oak Park will be better off if we all engage in this process.

Imagine Oak Park in the future, a village that prides itself on being surrounded by the beautiful and vibrant communities of Austin, Berwyn, and Cicero. An Oak Park that has shed its image and reputation as an insulated community and has blended its borders with its immediate neighbors. It is an Oak Park where Oak Parkers have friends in Austin, eat dinner in Berwyn, and shop in Cicero. It is a community that lifts more than just its own and invests beyond its borders. This Oak Park is not a pipe dream; it is a realistic possibility of what life could be like in the Village that we are proud to call home.



*"If you want to change how a person thinks, give up. You cannot change how another thinks. Give them a tool, the use of which will gradually cause them over time to think differently".*

*R. Buckminster Fuller, Architect, Inventor, Futurist*

# Taking a Knee...Again



by Jack Lewis, FPP '21

August 28th marked 75 years since Jackie Robinson met with the Brooklyn Dodgers to become the first professional African American baseball player. August 28th also marked four years since Colin Kaepernick first took a knee during the National Anthem in the NFL. How have sports impacted politics and empowered justice

movements? Why has kneeling become so commonplace in the sports world? What has changed in the sports world since then? Are sports and social justice always going to be intertwined?

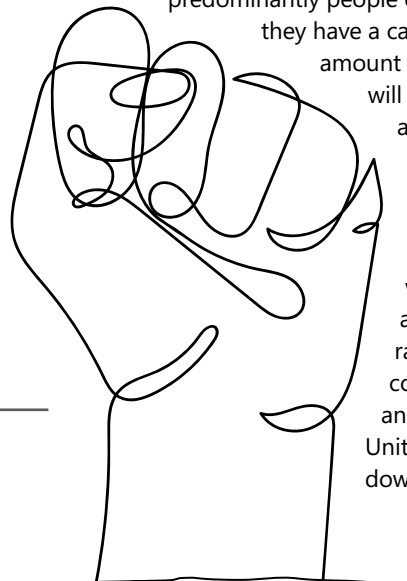
Kneeling during the National Anthem was a common display of activism led by NBA players this month, who aimed to highlight the senseless killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and now Jacob Blake. In addition to kneeling for members of the Black, Hispanic and Indigenous communities who have fallen by the hands of police, players have attended protests, started petitions, and even created foundations for change. High profile players such as LeBron James and Chris Paul have been outspoken leaders throughout these protests and some players even met with Barack Obama for guidance. WNBA and NBA players both opted to boycott games scheduled for August 26th, following the shooting of Jacob Blake. Washington Mystics players wore shirts that had seven holes in the back, a reference to how Kenosha officers shot Blake in the back. In addition to the graphic on the back of the shirts, ten players had a different letter from Blake's name.

Players of all races expressed their dissent of the most recent actions of Kenosha police, as well as the systemic problems plaguing communities of color.

A sobering moment recently was when Doc Rivers, the Black head coach for the Los Angeles Clippers, stated in a press conference, "We keep loving this country and this country doesn't love us back." Americans love their sports teams; we are addicted.

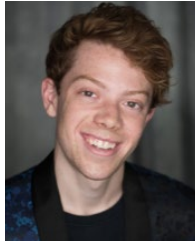
The athletes in the NBA, NFL, WNBA and others are predominantly people of color. They have realized that they have a captive audience and a tremendous amount of power and influence. Sports

will continue to be a remarkable and powerful platform for social change, so long as the players continue to flex their voices and harness their power. The power created from such widespread media coverage has allowed for players of all genders, races, religions, and creeds to continue their fight for equality and equity inside and outside of the United States. Their impact will go down in history as another chapter in the fight for equality.



# Teaching Social Justice Concepts

by Maggie Healy, FPP '15 and Remy Sheehan, FPP '15  
Three Pillars Initiative Program Officers



The Three Pillars Initiative (TPI) was formed in 2018, following the success of FPP, in order to create and distribute youth philanthropy education curriculum to communities across the country. Like

FPP, the goal of TPI is to teach students about the art, science, and business of philanthropy. But, more than that, the curriculum was designed to help students understand that philanthropy is not about rich and powerful adults. The philanthropy paradigm we teach is about a tool for change, a lens through which to see the world differently, an inspiration that encourages youth to be the change they want to see in the world. Our program has never wavered in what it seeks to accomplish. And, as part of the TPI mission, we commit to engage youth in the continuing narrative on social justice. While it seems complex, it is really very simple: social justice begins with all of us treating each other with fairness and respect. Period. There is no other starting point.

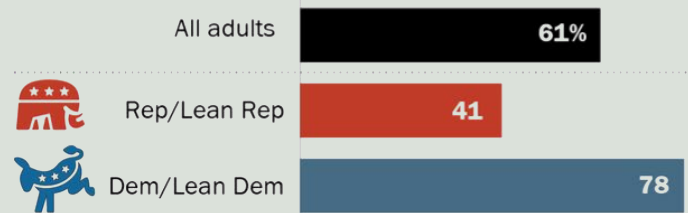
As members of the philanthropic community, we find it absolutely imperative to listen to the people whose lives we seek to change for the better, to more deeply understand their plight, to listen to the unspoken words conveyed through actions and to step up to act as catalysts for change in our communities. Philanthropy cannot just be about money. Philanthropy cannot just be about power. Philanthropy is about people, people unified in doing the right thing. We are all neighbors in the global community and it is our duty to act as such.

With that to guide us, the TPI curriculum, which has always been heavily focused on Root Cause Analysis to fully understand and appreciate the goal of philanthropy, was recently enhanced to better address the social injustices and inequities that plague our nation. This year, the new junior cohort will begin using Root Cause Analysis to more fully engage students in dialogue on race relations, immigration policy, affordable health care, equal education, gender equity, affordable housing and economic disparities. The enhanced curriculum will also focus on corporate social responsibility, particularly their financial commitment to social and environmental betterment, employee assistance and good governance. And, finally, the concept and practice of Socially Responsible Investing (SRI) will receive more attention since nearly \$12 trillion in assets in the US alone are currently managed using SRI criteria. It is our hope that these curriculum enhancements will better prepare our future philanthropists for leadership roles in our community.

According to a Pew Research Center survey, about six in ten U.S. adults say there's too much economic inequality in the country these days, and among that group, most say addressing it requires significant changes to the country's economic system.

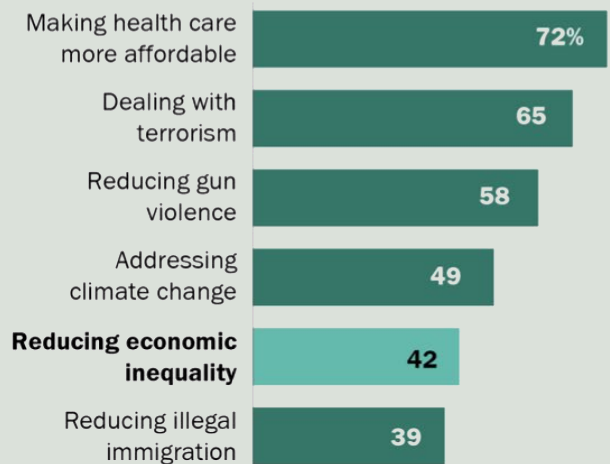
## A majority of Americans say there's too much economic inequality in the U.S ...

*% saying there's too much economic inequality in the country these days*



## ... but relatively few see it as a top policy priority for the federal government

*% saying each of the following should be a top priority for the federal government to address*



Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted Sept. 16-29, 2019. "Most Americans Say There Is Too Much Economic Inequality in the U.S., but Fewer Than Half Call It a Top Priority"

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

# FPP College Leadership Awards Announced

Each year, the Future Philanthropists Program grants two monetary awards to college students who continue to demonstrate what they learned through their FPP experience. We are pleased to announce that this year's awardees are Julia Eddebuettel who is at Cornell and Avery Elsner who is at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign. A description of their volunteer engagement follows.



*Julia Eddebuettel, FPP '19*

One in three women, one in four men, and one in two non-binary individuals will experience an unhealthy relationship in their lifetime, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's National Intimate Partner Violence and Sexual Violence survey. These statistics are unfortunately surprising to many given

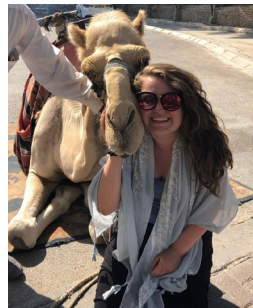
how historically relationship and sexual violence is seldom discussed in a public manner. However, that is the exact issue – young people are not educated on relationship health and the signs of a healthy and unhealthy relationship (romantic or not), and thus can find themselves in unhealthy, and sometimes dangerous situations.

That was the case with the Love family. Yeardeley Love was a senior at University of Virginia when she was killed by her ex-boyfriend in 2010. Her family started the One Love Foundation in her honor and One Love exists because Yeardeley's death was preventable if anyone around her – including herself – had been taught the difference between a healthy and unhealthy relationship and how to recognize the signs. Yeardeley's family started One Love so that others would have the information that they did not – information about the unhealthy and potentially dangerous behaviors in a relationship that could save lives. One Love educates and empowers students by giving them the tools to intervene in the unhealthy relationships they see or experiences in their own lives with the ultimate goal of lowering and eradicating incidences of relationship violence, domestic abuse, and sexual assault. In the decade since its founding, One Love has grown enormously, with now more than 700 high school and college chapters, including one at Cornell University, which I co-founded.

I have been passionate about advocacy, education, and awareness on issues of domestic and sexual violence since I was involved with the Sarah's Inn youth committee in high school. Upon coming to Cornell, I tried to seek out a club focused on these issues in the fall of my freshmen year but could not find any student groups with the specific focus. Throughout many experiences during my freshmen year though, the necessity for an organization such as a One Love chapter on my campus became clear. According to 2019 data from the biannual Cornell Campus Climate Survey, one in four women and one in sixteen men at Cornell experience sexual assault by physical force or incapacitation by the time they graduate, with even higher rates for the LGBTQ+ community. Additionally, 12.2% of students reported being a "victim of domestic or dating violence," though this statistic is believed to be biased downward due to the heavy connotations of the language of the question, and because people might not see the signs of the abuse.

In the fall of 2019, I co-founded Cornell's One Love chapter with a peer of mine who interned at the foundation that summer. I was familiar with the organization from my work with Sarah's Inn and jumped at the opportunity to fill a knowledge gap at Cornell with this education.

Through FPP, I saw the difference that could be made by self-starters taking initiative, and the founding team was extremely committed to seeing our goal through. We recruited an executive board and began planning the club with an emphasis on how to be an inclusive and accessible resource for communities historically excluded from conversations of domestic violence, such as BIPOC and the LGBTQ+ community. This past spring semester we established a full executive board and general body of facilitators. We gave some pilot workshops in fall 2019 and were planning workshops for spring 2020, which we had to suspend due to COVID. The FPP Alumni Leadership grant I was awarded in May to be used for One Love will be instrumental in helping us create educational materials to virtually distribute for the virtual workshops we plan to host this semester and giving us more financial flexibility to hold events (once it is safe to do so again!). The entire One Love at Cornell community deeply appreciates FPP's generosity and would like to thank FPP and the Community Foundation for this generous award.



*Avery Elsner, FPP '18*

The UniPlace Community Service RSO (or Registered Student Organization) is a student group at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign that helps run free community dinners put on by UniPlace Christian Church every Wednesday. The dinners primarily serve the homeless, food insecure, and student populations of Champaign County. Student volunteers

cook, serve, and clean up after the dinners, as well as hold separate meetings and events to work to expand the scope of our service to the community. Although the club is associated with a church, it is not religious in nature and includes people from a wide array of backgrounds and belief systems, and has become a tight-knit group of students united by their passion and dedication.

I became a part of UniPlace Community Service early in the fall of 2019, and joined the executive board as Vice President at the start of the spring semester, with the agreement that I would take on the role of President in the fall of 2020. Current circumstances are not what anyone thought they would be in January, and college students returning to school nationwide are adjusting to a new kind of campus life. We as an organization have had to adapt as well. Our dinners are now provided in paper bags distributed in the parking lot, rather than guests breaking bread in the church's basement. We are making other changes to ensure the safety and wellbeing of both our volunteers and guests, and I am certain we will continue to evolve in the coming months. Despite the challenges, I feel confident that in the upcoming semester we will grow stronger as an organization and closer as a community (even as we maintain social distancing practices).

# Joeisms

## Read the directions for anything when you are calm.



Joe Smith, FPP Mentor

“One cannot and must not try to erase the past merely because it does not fit the present.”

*Golda Meir*

Let me begin with the reminder that the common bond which unites us is the word *Future*. With the current focus on the *Now* it is an understatement of hyperbolic qualities to say that in these extraordinary times emotions are running high. Neither of these situations seems to be ending in the foreseeable future. It is the unforeseeable future to which I ask you to turn your attention.

This unique time of troubles has one common denominator. That common denominator is the worship of speed over substance. How

many times have we read or heard of a retraction being made for a statement or an action be it on the Internet, Television or Twitter being wedded to the excuse: “I didn’t think through it before I said or did it and I didn’t mean it”? Simply put, if you are going to say something, you must mean it and if you write it down, you are going to own it.

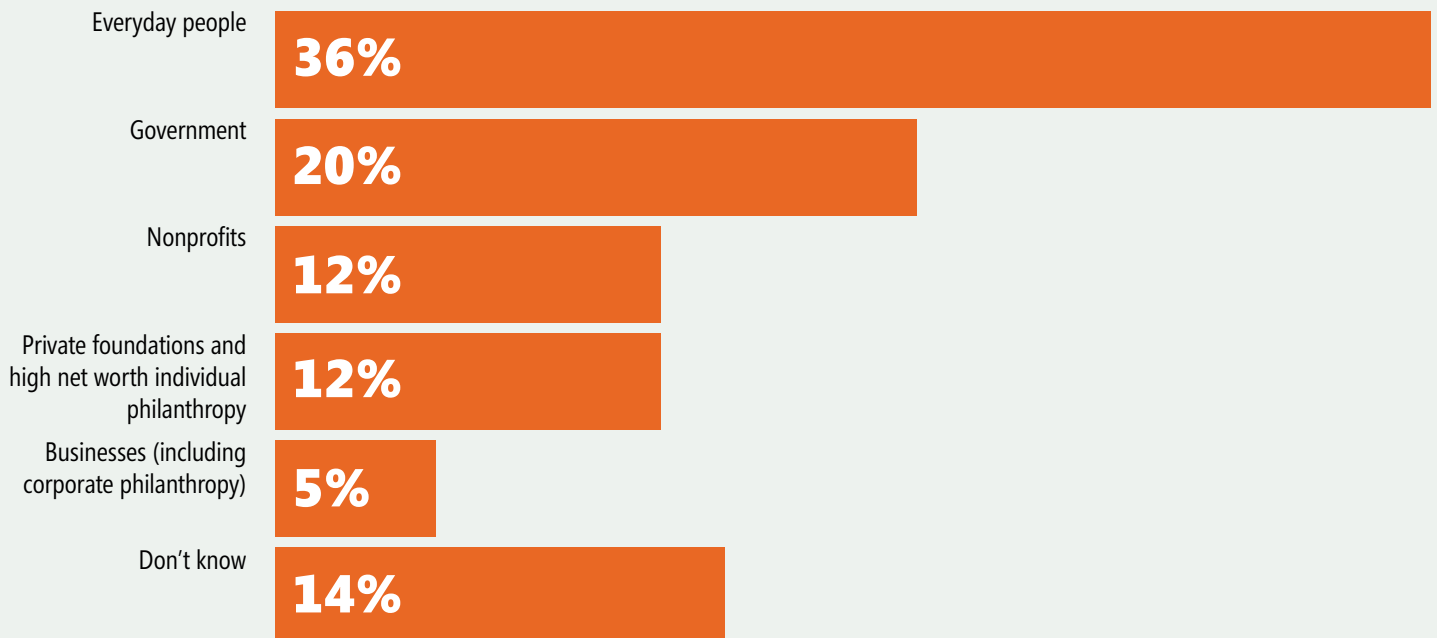
Slowing down to act with calm prudence is not a bad long-term strategy. In fact, it is the essence of strategy. Slowing down leads to command of events and control of situations. Slowing down allows listening skills to be engaged. It never ceases to amaze me how much I hear when I take the time to listen.

Let us keep our eyes on the prize and our feet on the ground. Philanthropy still means the “Love of Humankind.”

“The best time to plant a tree is one hundred years ago, or right now.”

*Andre Malraux*

### Who is Best Positioned to Address Societal Challenges?



Source: Independent Sector: *Trust in Civil Society: Understanding the factors driving trust in nonprofits and philanthropy (2020)*