



“Managing the stewardship of charitable giving is a moment-to-moment dignified responsibility.”

VIRGINIA G. PIPER

#PiperTrustMoments

Celebrating 20 Years of Moments

SEPTEMBER 20, 2019

#PiperTrustMoments, 5th Edition

With fall nearly here, and school back in swing, September is the perfect time to highlight Piper Trust grantees and investments that help Arizona students enjoy the greater opportunities and higher quality of life that education brings.

Starting a new school year can stir anxious feelings for any child—but especially those who lack basic supplies and necessities such as clothing. As such, a very special Piper Trust program, initiated by our Trustees, supports disadvantaged children with school clothing essentials.

Each year, Piper Trust funds [Back-to-School Grants](#) for select schools in Maricopa County. Since 2003, these grants have provided elementary schools with more than \$7 million to support schoolchildren in need of basic clothing, underwear, and shoes.

Providing these essentials can be transformative and foster a positive impact on a child's self-esteem—which can translate to steady attendance and stronger academic achievement. Our Trustees are passionate about helping address this fundamental need so that more children can kick off the school year with confidence.

Like school essentials, small things can make huge impacts in children's lives. This short #PiperTrustMoments message from Brenda Thomson of [Arizona Humanities](#) is an inspiring reminder.



Brenda Thomson, executive director, Arizona Humanities.
View video: pipertrust.org/pipertrustmoments

Warmly,

Mary Jane Rynd
President and CEO

GRANTMAKING SPOTLIGHT

MELISSA TRUJILLO OF BE A LEADER FOUNDATION



Be A Leader Foundation co-founders Gary and Melissa Trujillo celebrate the college graduation of a former program participant.

[Be A Leader Foundation](#) works to close the educational attainment gap for underserved students. Through innovative youth programs and top-notch mentoring, the organization inspires and empowers students, guiding them on their way to post-secondary learning institutions. “We primarily support kids who will be first in their families to go to college,” said Melissa Trujillo, co-founder and executive director of Be A Leader Foundation. “We help prepare them, motivate them, highlight their leadership skills, and instill a mindset that college is attainable for them.”

(continued)

Trujillo and her husband Gary started Be A Leader Foundation in 2002. The first in each of their families to attend college, they experienced the impact that education makes. “Education is the great equalizer and can change the trajectory of not just a student but their entire family, and in turn their community,” Trujillo said.

In its first year, the organization served 32 students. It now serves more than 8,000 annually. “Piper Trust was there for us in the beginning, and has been there along the way,” said Trujillo. A dozen years ago, the Trust supported renovation and technology upgrades at the Roosevelt Community Technology Center. “Piper Trust was our largest donor to that capital campaign, and really allowed us to open that facility. The Center is still going strong and is used by the school district and the larger community,” said Trujillo.

Perhaps the most profound assistance came through Piper Trust’s [ATLAS program](#), which builds the operational capacity and organizational resilience of nonprofits. “It was transformational because we had been growing so fast for so long,” Trujillo said. “It was imperative that we step back and focus on organizational capacity issues.”



Members of the Be A Leader Foundation team graduate from the ATLAS program. From left: Jennifer Bonnett (ATLAS program consultant), Karla Robles, Gary Trujillo, Melissa Trujillo, and Soilo Felix.

ATLAS allowed the organization to focus on nuts-and-bolts items such as board governance and board recruitment, employee manuals, and HR capacities. “All that stuff that nobody ever talks about made a huge difference for us in the strength of the organization,” Trujillo said.

As a result, Trujillo views Piper Trust more as a partner than a funder. “They are investing in you as an organization so that you can turn around and invest in the greater community,” she said. “Piper Trust is a catalyst for strengthening organizations doing phenomenal work, and for making our community better.”

A SPECIAL VIRGINIA PIPER MOMENT



Virginia Galvin Piper (far right) attends a commencement ceremony at one of the many colleges she supported, May 1974.

For decades, Virginia generously supported hundreds of students seeking a college education—many being first-generation. Virginia’s faith in these students helped them thrive and seek careers in fields such as elementary education, family law, and social work. For every student she helped, she affected not only the student’s life, but also that of the student’s family.

THERE ARE ALL KINDS OF
MOMENTS IN GIVING

SHARE YOURS

#PiperTrustMoments

ABOUT

Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust supports organizations that enrich health, well-being, and opportunity for the people of Maricopa County, Arizona.

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