



The
Glenridge

Charitable Foundation

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NEWS

By Marny Stuart, Executive Director

Foundation's New Mission Statement Reflects Growth and Future Success

Who could have predicted the success of The Glenridge Charitable Foundation with its early start as an idea that was developed by the Social Responsibility Committee seven years ago? For two years that committee met on a regular basis and developed the basis for The Glenridge Charitable Foundation. A lot of hard work went into the now successful Foundation by a lot of dedicated Members and staff. Planning sessions proved fruitful as we sought out expert advice on legal, banking, and IRS tax issues. The Foundation became a reality in October 2016 and accepted its first donations in December 2016. That first year we had 38 Members place their trust in us with their donations to and through the Foundation.

Since those early days, the Foundation has evolved and has outgrown many firsts. For example, it has grown from its original four internal funds -- the Academy Scholarship Fund, the Benevolence Fund, the Endowment Fund for the Performing Arts Center (GPAC), and the Team Member Emergency Assistance Fund -- to six funds. The Compassion Fund and the Six Keys



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Fund joined the Foundation in recent years. One fund, the Academy Scholarship Fund has also expanded its scope to include the Kay Pezzillo Arts Fund under its umbrella.

Another first was when the Foundation changed its logo to "the rising star" signifying the Foundation's belief in its future success. The most recent first was when we redirected some of its resources to raise funds for the needs of The Glenridge community through donations to our six internal funds which receive no other financial support than through the generosity of its Membership.

As part of redirecting its resources for philanthropic reasons, it only seemed fitting to reevaluate the Foundation's mission statement -- *"Sharing our gifts of time, talent and treasure."* In a vote of 15 to 1, the Board of Directors is pleased to announce that the new mission statement of the Foundation is -- *"To inspire generosity and social good through philanthropy."* You will soon start to see the use of this mission statement on all Foundation related material.

Charity Begins at Home

When asked the question, “What makes you want to give to others?”, Member Jack Allen did not hesitate to respond. Quite frankly, his answer caught me off guard. He said, **“You can’t outgive God!”**

Jack began his working career at the age of 14 at his neighborhood grocery store, where he continued to work all through high school. When he went to college and then to law school, he worked in a clothing store and spent many years in a retail environment later in his life. From those early days in the neighborhood grocery store and continuing through the years of his formal education, he will tell you that he was mentored by some remarkable businesspeople who taught him the value of being kind, how to treat people with respect, how to develop positive customer service, and how to work out agreeable business solutions. I was not surprised how Jack’s young life values and experiences mirrored Glenridge employees’ core values — *“I am kind, trustworthy and have a positive attitude!”*

Jack attributes his success in life to his dedication to Christ. He believes that God has had his hand on him his entire life and although Jack may have been a disappointment at times, Christ never abandoned him. Like many of us, Jack has had his share, if not more than his fair share, of life’s obstacles to overcome. Thankful for having a higher being in his life and the blessings that come from a relationship with God, he has dedicated his life to giving back by practicing tithing.

It’s clear that Jack and his wife, Jody, are looking for ways to express their thankfulness for the goodness and graces they have experienced in their personal lives. It is not a



Jack and Jody Allen

business transaction for them; it is their inspiration and connection to helping others. They are committed to paying it back or, in some case, paying it forward, to make this world a better place. Jack and Jody believe that God is the source of all their blessings. They just try to demonstrate their gratitude for His care through their philanthropy.

Jack believes we all dream of making this world a better place. We all want a world where there is no poverty, disease, crime, or war. If we want to make this world a better place and if you are fortunate enough to have the financial wherewithal to do so, then donating to various charitable organizations that work to address and eradicate these problems is one solution. Donations do not always have to be in the form of money. One can donate their time by volunteering for causes close to their heart, which is another avenue pursued by Jack and Jody.

During Jack’s career, he practiced what he believed. To him, “business is one big practice session” meaning that if you want to be good at something, say playing a musical instrument, or playing the game of golf, or running a business successfully, you must practice ... practice ... practice. You can only

be successful in business if you treat your employees well, if you apply all the principles you learned through your formal education, and, more importantly, you incorporate your life experiences into the mixture.

The principles Jack believes in, including tithing, were practiced in his business endeavors as well. By embracing corporate philanthropy into Direct Buy, the company he was Executive Vice President, President, and part owner in for 28 years, tithing became a way of life. The company benefited in many ways. Tithing made it possible for the company to take a portion of its profits and create a Foundation. The company also started a profit-sharing plan for its 350 employees. Direct Buy took a once financially struggling company to an extremely successful one. The company empowered its employees to think and act as business owners, which was an easily identifiable factor in its success as it grew.

Direct Buy also benefited from its business partners' commitment to corporate philanthropy. It led to the company having the reputation of being a good place to work, it

increased employee satisfaction, and instilled the sense that the company really cared about its employees. The result was increased productivity and employee engagement. It helped to create a business family, where the company took care of them when they were sick or had a family emergency.

Life at The Glenridge

Now, years later, the Allen's live at the Glenridge. When asked why he donated to The Glenridge in support of its internal funds, Jack simply responded, "This is our home. The Glenridge is a kind and good place. We love living here and **that is why we give here!**" That says it all.

Jack says, "life is the most precious gift we all have." All life is valued regardless of family struggles, life's challenges, the difficult circumstances we have been through, or one's own deep-seeded fears. He says, "when you dedicate your life to God, families thrive, and religious liberties thrive, and your faith becomes the cornerstone of your life." For Jack and Jody Allen, living their faith is their way of life ... lives well lived.

About Jack and Jody Allen

The Allen's have been married for 61 years and are fortunate to have three sons, 12 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. Jack grew up in Valparaiso, Indiana, and Jody is from Chattanooga, Tennessee. Jack and Jody both earned BA degrees from Valparaiso University and Jack went on to earn his JD degree there as well.

Jack practiced law for 10 years and was a Judge for nine years before moving to Direct Buy where he spent 28 years, 14 of them as President. Jody's interests took her into the educational field where she taught second grade and high school business classes. In his free time, Jack likes to golf, fish, read, travel, and attend yearly family reunions. Once again, Jody's interests take her in a different direction. She likes to bike, walk, bird watching, read, and travel. She has also volunteered her time at Selby Gardens and the Sarasota Audubon Society.

The Glenridge has benefited from having Jack and Jody Allen as Members these past seven plus years. Their commitment to their beliefs and to The Glenridge family is remarkable. The Glenridge is a better place because of them and their generosity.

Supporting Glenridge Charities

In doing research for this article, I identified the type of charities that appear to be the most important to our contributors. They appear in no particular order:

- Art charities
- Cultural charities
- Educational charities
- Health charities
- Religious charities
- International charities including Disaster Relief & Humanitarian Efforts

It was amazing to me to see just how closely these top choices resembled our own Member supported internal funds:



In response to art charities, The Glenridge has the Kay Pezzillo Arts Fund, which falls under the umbrella of the Academy Scholarship Fund.



The Six Keys Fund is a match for health charities as the entire fund is dedicated to improving the quality of life and on-site medical care here at The Glenridge.



The Glenridge Performing Arts Center Endowment Fund certainly is a great match for cultural charities.



Our Compassion Fund is in a league of its own as to the services it provides as a religious charity.



The Glenridge Academy Scholarship Fund is a wonderful internal charity for those who want to give to educational initiatives.



The Team Member Emergency Assistance Fund has demonstrated humanitarian efforts internally as well as individual financial disaster relief for employees with international implications. We have helped our employees with their personal crises involving a tragedy in their home country.

The Glenridge Charitable Foundation provides six giving opportunities, internal to The Glenridge, that provide needed financial assistance to our *very* own employees as well as benefits to our *very* own Members. So, the next time you think about making a charitable donation, remember ...

“Charity begins at home!”

