

CONNECTIONS

TOGETHER WE WILL CREATE A COMMUNITY
OF OPPORTUNITY WHERE ALL PEOPLE THRIVE



Greater Twin Cities
United Way



Community Connection



Innovation In Action



Lifting Our Voices for Change

Welcome to the fall edition of the Tocqueville Society newsletter. We're excited to share some inspiring stories within this issue.

I don't know about you, but after the record heat this summer, I'm thankful for the cooler autumn temperatures. It feels like the perfect time to slow down and reflect before we launch into the hustle and bustle of the holiday season.

It was so gratifying to connect with many of you at the Tocqueville dinner this summer. I appreciated the opportunity to honor the philanthropic work and leadership of fellow Tocqueville members Stacy and Matt Bogart and Julie and Doug Baker, Jr. and learn more about their unique journeys.

In this community, we each have our own reasons for giving. But our end-goal is the same — to create a community where all thrive, regardless of income, race or place.

As Tocqueville Society members, we are in a unique position to share these “Why I Give” stories with others. I truly believe that as leaders in giving, it is our collective responsibility to motivate more people in our community to join us.

As we enter this season of reflection and gratitude, I encourage you to lift your voice and share your “why” with friends, family, colleagues and even perfect strangers. You never know what might inspire that same generosity in others.

The Tocqueville Society exists because of passionate donors like you. Together, we are maximizing our philanthropic impact and making lasting change. Thank you for your continued leadership as changemakers in our community.

In gratitude,

MIKE DOYLE
TOCQUEVILLE SOCIETY CABINET CHAIR

A Stable Home is the Foundation that Enables Us All to Thrive

For many of us, this time of year makes us think of home. We find comfort in familiar surroundings and favorite traditions. Home is our sanctuary — a safe place to rest our heads and reset for what's next.

Unfortunately, for too many of our neighbors, a place to call home is not guaranteed. On any given night in the Twin Cities, approximately 6,700 people are experiencing homelessness.

With your help, Greater Twin Cities United Way is working to transform the housing system in our state to achieve a long-term goal of ensuring episodes of homelessness are rare, brief and nonrecurring. To do this, we continue to meet urgent needs while making lasting change to improve systems.

How We Meet Urgent Needs

Our 211 resource helpline connects callers to resources like emergency shelter and rental assistance. In 2022, our 211 resource helpline fielded 144,446 requests related to housing and shelter.

Over the course of 18 months ending in September 2022, 211 also served as the access point for RentHelpMN — answering more than 380,000 calls to help Minnesotans impacted by the pandemic access nearly \$450 million in rental assistance.

Through our Community Investments portfolio, we partner with nonprofit organizations that provide a range of supportive housing services for people who are experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness. In our grantmaking process, we prioritize support for nonprofits doing the most impactful work to provide culturally specific approaches for immigrant communities, working with young people in foster care, tackling LGBTQ+ homelessness, and more.

Home For Good is our annual volunteer initiative that provides households transitioning from homelessness to housing with “Welcome Home Bins” full of essential items needed for a safe, stable home.

TOCQUEVILLE SOCIETY CREDO

The Greater Twin Cities United Way Tocqueville Society exists to maximize and multiply the collective impact of innovative philanthropic leaders to help solve our community's most significant challenges.

2023 UPCOMING EVENTS

NOW - DEC 9
HOME FOR GOOD

NOV 20 - DEC 1
GIVING TUESDAY CAMPAIGN





How We Make Lasting Change

We advocate for policy changes to prevent homelessness before it starts and help individuals and families stay in their homes. As a result, the 2023 legislative session saw historic investments in household stability, with \$1 billion dedicated to affordable housing and homelessness response.

We again co-sponsored Homeless Day on the Hill with our partners at the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless — a vital opportunity to connect lawmakers with those who are affected by homelessness.

Finally, in June 2023, we launched Pathways Home, a region-wide innovation initiative to disrupt the pipeline into homelessness for foster youth and adults transitioning from incarceration. Recent data shows that these populations are at greater risk of homelessness and housing instability — with People of Color, specifically Black and Indigenous people, vastly overrepresented.

In its first 18 months, Pathways Home will support 11 nonprofit organizations working to prevent homelessness before it starts by providing \$1.2 million in funding and technical assistance and facilitating peer-to-peer collaboration. Together, we are transforming the housing system by focusing on preventing, rather than responding to, homelessness, giving young people the opportunity to build stable adult lives full of promise.

Your support makes this work possible. Thank you for helping ensure our neighbors have a safe place to live and a stable foundation for the future.

In gratitude,


JOHN WILGERS
PRESIDENT & CEO



Building a Legacy

Longtime Tocqueville Society members Bob and Gail Buuck are two of the most unassuming people you will ever meet. Unbeknownst to some, the Buucks have been a quiet philanthropic force in the Twin Cities for decades.

Tending to shy away from recognition, the couple quietly express their values through community support. Both were raised in middle class families in which volunteer work and community service were second nature.

EARLY DAYS

Bob was a small-town Indiana boy from a long line of Lutheran pastors and missionaries. He came to the Twin Cities to study at the University of Minnesota, where he earned his bachelor's degree, and later his MBA from the Carlson School of Management.

Gail was a big city girl from Chicago, involved in community work through the Catholic church most of her life. She studied education at the College of Saint Teresa in Winona, Minnesota before returning to Chicago to begin her teaching career.

Back in Minnesota at the invitation of friends who had an extra room, Gail met Bob through friends the first day she was in town. They've been together ever since.

As Bob built his business career in the Twin Cities, Gail taught elementary school and together, they started a family. David, John and Katherine all share their parents' hearts for giving back.

Bob's career began to take off after he co-founded American Medical Systems with friends. Still, early on there wasn't much extra money. So, while he ran the company,

Gail continued to volunteer with social service agencies like the Catholic Charities drop-in center in downtown Minneapolis, food shelves and Meals on Wheels.

Then came a life-altering challenge. The couple noticed drastic changes in their toddler son, John's, mobility. The boy received a diagnosis of Charcot-Marie-Tooth (CMT) disease, a neuromuscular disease affecting peripheral nerves, and has been in a wheelchair since he was twelve.

Quickly realizing the immense commitment of time and resources



it takes to care for a child with a disability, Gail quit teaching to devote time to John’s appointments and physical therapy.

These experiences led to the family’s foray into philanthropy through the Courage Center, where John received therapy, and the Charcot-Marie-Tooth Association, which supports research into finding a cure. They continue to support these causes today, along with the Buuck Family Scholarship for students with disabilities, which they created at the University of Minnesota, where Bob served on the Foundation board.

“I started out simply as a mom bringing this little toddler to therapy, and then really, really bonded with [Courage Center of Golden Valley] and eventually served on the board. Then, when we were able, we started giving money,” said Gail.

UNIMAGINED SUCCESS

Over the years, Bob’s company grew substantially. In 1985, its sale to Pfizer created new opportunities for impact. For the first time they were able to consider how they might share their gifts to have a transformational impact.

Gail will quickly tell you that she prefers boots-on-the-ground volunteer work to serving on boards because it provides an opportunity to get to know people and understand their needs. Bob, on the other hand, found his business acumen beneficial when analyzing which organizations would make the greatest impact.

“We learned that providing modest financial support as a courtesy response may have seemed the right thing to do at the time but was often not sufficient to make a meaningful difference for the recipient nor was it always consistent with the charitable mission and focus that was beginning to emerge from our family discussions,” recalled Bob.

Eventually, they articulated the values guiding their philanthropic giving. While goals have evolved, community, compassion, opportunity and integrity remain at the heart of their giving.

SHARED FAMILY VALUES FOR GIVING BACK

Today, all three children sit on the family foundation’s board, with Katherine at the helm. Each also gives and volunteers on their own, of which Bob and Gail are incredibly proud.

Gail shares that their children learned by example: “They saw us doing it and sometimes we’d take them with us when we’d volunteer, and they would meet the people we were helping. When you get to know people and their stories, it’s easier to walk in their shoes.”

Gail also believes navigating a disability made a huge difference. She observes her family shares a keen eye toward accessibility that grew from experiences others might lack. That exposure, she says, made her children more empathetic and eager to volunteer.

In recent years, Bob and Gail have been thinking about legacy. Though their personalities could not be more different — he’s quietly confident while she’s effervescent — it’s clear after 55 years of marriage and a lifetime of shared experiences they are of one mind when it comes to the future they hope to shape.

NOW – LASTING IMPACT

Recently, the Buucks chose to make a transformational gift of \$30 million to Greater Twin Cities United Way to build a more prosperous and equitable community. This new personal gift is above and beyond their generous foundation work.

It is the single largest individual gift in Greater Twin Cities United Way history and will have a tremendous impact on our community for generations to come.

Starting with workplace giving campaigns hosted by American Medical Systems in the 1970s and 80s, the couple deepened their support to the organization through annual giving, early support of Screen at Three, and establishment of the Buuck Family Early Childhood Education Endowment. United Way felt like a natural fit for a gift they hope will define their legacy and inspire other transformational giving in our region.

Although the couple now splits their time between Minnesota and Arizona, the Twin Cities is their home and the community in which they want to leave an enduring legacy.

The Buucks worked closely with Greater Twin Cities United Way to structure a philanthropic commitment that honors their desire to give more during their lifetimes and maximizes their impact into the future.

“United Way is an organization that’s well known and well run. We’ve been here almost 60 years and we’ve developed a trust level. We have the same value system. When we went down the list of all the programming that’s supported, it’s everything we support,” said Gail. “It was like we’re on the same page.”

“Bob and Gail’s generous gift leverages United Way’s expertise in community impact strategies and provides support in a variety of ways that offer flexibility, stability and lasting impact. We are excited to work with them in new ways,” said John Wilgers, President and CEO, Greater Twin Cites United Way.

The gift includes an annual fund commitment of \$2 million over eight years that will increase the stability of United Way’s core work to meet urgent needs and strengthen our region’s nonprofit sector through multi-year partnerships.

A \$7.5 million catalytic gift for our innovation initiatives will accelerate new solutions United Way is advancing in our community that align with the Buuck’s closely held values supporting education and economic opportunity. The impact of this infusion of innovation funds includes:

- increasing the number of early childcare centers bringing trauma-sensitive care into everyday practice, through 80x3: Resilient from the Start
- accelerating systems change by disrupting the pipeline into homelessness through Pathways Home
- addressing food insecurity on a community scale by ensuring a robust launch of the second phase of Full Lives
- ensuring all students have access to wealth-building, purpose-driven careers through Career Academies

Finally, a new Buuck Family Community Impact Endowment, which will grow to approximately \$20 million in future years, will make it possible for Greater Twin Cities United Way to support children and families meeting basic needs in our community for many future generations.

Bob and Gail clearly hold a sincere desire to make a lasting difference in the Greater Twin Cities community that has given them so much.

They acknowledge barriers that lead to entrenched disparities and believe Greater Twin Cities United Way is well-positioned to address these challenges and create a community where all can thrive, regardless of income, race or place.

Tocqueville Members in Action





Thank you for your support!

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PLEASE CONTACT LINNE LEMKE, CFRE, PLANNED GIVING OFFICER
GREATER TWIN CITIES UNITED WAY (612) 340-7434 OR LINNE.LEMKE@GTCUW.ORG

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