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Contact: Tracy Gary, Inspired Legacies
Cell, 415-377-9447
tracy@inspiredlegacies.org

Inspired Legacies Launches Breakthrough Youth Giving Circle Initiative

Inspired Legacies, the largest provider of legacy and donor education tools in the country, launched its Youth Giving Circle Initiative, July 22. The program, “**Inspiring Youth to Bring About Change: Tools for the Generosity Generation**,” offers youth ages 13-18 a guide for philanthropic giving with an emphasis towards community need, values-based giving, transformative leadership, collaborative decision-making and fund-raising.

Those who register with Inspired Legacies’ website: <http://www.inspiredlegacies.org/youthgiving/> can now download free a 169-page guide for facilitators and youth. The curriculum for the program, written by youth and philanthropy experts, Karen Payne and Sondra Shaw-Hardy, uses many of the principles and models from Inspired Legacies’ founder Tracy Gary’s book “Inspired Philanthropy: Creating a Giving Plan and Leaving a Legacy” and ideas collected from a giving circle pilot conducted two years ago with youth in a diverse local community. “The program is designed to harness the vitality and caring of today’s young people and provide the tools for them to become philanthropic leaders in their own communities and beyond,” says Ms. Gary.

This set of philanthropic tools, is distinguished from many others because of the way it is organized and it’s content. There are 10 sessions, divided into two-hour intervals. These sessions are geared specifically to after school programs as well as religious and family foundation next generation groups.

The tools in this guide emphasize methods for assuring cultural competency, respect for diverse opinions and support the democratization of philanthropy through social justice and interfacing with community leaders and nonprofits. “Today’s young people are swamped with news about local and global problems, but remain uninformed about how to effectively make changes for those problems. Through giving circles, young people can learn how to effect change. The process of the youth giving circle is to be exploratory, fun, participatory and open-hearted, says, Ms. Gary.

The materials, created for uplifting skills and passion, also aim to have a financial impact. Ms. Gary asserts, “Within three years we hope to catalyze 1000 Youth Giving Circles who raise and give \$10,000. Through their collective efforts worldwide, this would manifest another one million dollars for much needed societal change projects.”

A great example of just how fun and important these programs are for our youth and our communities can be seen through the eyes of Haley Jenkins, age 18 and about to enter college, Jenkins was a member of a youth giving circle named The WildThings. “This is our time. Being part of The WildThings has changed my life. I am honored to be the Spokesperson for Inspiring Youth to Bring About Change’ Youth Giving Circles Initiative,” she says.

The 10 session Youth Giving Circle Initiative has been made possible by the generous contributions of eight foundations including The Lawrence Welk Family Foundation and The Gruber Family Foundation and by some 22 other individuals. Because of this exemplary support, Inspired Legacies is able to offer these comprehensive PDF downloads at no cost. In the fall, for those who are registered, Inspired Legacies will offer support training via teleconferencing at a nominal fee for teachers and facilitators of the program. Please share this good news in your newsletters, meetings and blogs, register and become an Inspiring Youth Facilitator. www.inspiredlegacies.org/youthgiving/