



Skees Family Foundation

2018 Annual Report



Skees Family Foundation works to end poverty by partnering with social entrepreneurs building self-help models in **education** and **job-creation** and leveraging **storytelling** for social change.



Skees Family Foundation – Trust-Based Philanthropy in Action

By Whitney Caruso, [Third Plateau Social Impact Strategies](#)

We’ve partnered with Skees Family Foundation (SFF) for several years, to help create a grantmaking strategy that aligns with the family’s values and interests, conduct landscape research to identify trends in the field, train the foundation’s board, source potential grantee partners, and gather grantee feedback to ensure an environment of continuous improvement. From weekly check-ins to full-day strategic brainstorming to family retreats, our work together has built on trust, friendship, and shared commitment to social change.

Working with SFF has been an incredible opportunity to see *trust-based philanthropy** in action. SFF exemplifies this in five key ways:

1. SFF gives unrestricted, multiyear grants. Rather than limiting grants to specific programs, the foundation trusts its grantee partners to spend their grants as they see fit. SFF believes that its grantees (both their staff and the communities they serve) are the true experts and know how best to utilize resources to further their mission.
2. SFF requires minimal paperwork. The foundation is a strong believer that time is money. In an effort to maximize SFF’s current and potential grantees’ time, SFF does not accept proposals and instead proactively researches organizations that align with its mission. Furthermore, instead of written grantee reports, SFF asks grantee partners to participate in a quick annual update phone call to share their progress and upcoming goals.
3. SFF operates in a transparent and accessible manner. The foundation has a robust, informative site that outlines its grantmaking strategy and provides relevant information to potential and current grantees. Furthermore, family members make the effort to engage with grantees and make themselves available to support them as opportunities arise.
4. SFF is committed to continuous improvement. Each year, the foundation asks us to solicit feedback from grantees about SFF during the annual grantee update calls. We anonymize and aggregate this feedback to ensure grantees can be honest and forthcoming in their feedback. After reviewing the trends of their grantees’ perceptions, SFF’s board works to respond to recommendations and make changes to better serve its grantees.
5. SFF provides support beyond funding. The foundation recognizes the small size of its grants, and offers other ways to support its partners. SFF’s non-financial grantee support has included, among other things, connecting grantees to one another, creating spaces for peer learning, and publishing blog articles to help share grantee stories.

We believe that creating trusting and respectful relationships is critical to effectively seeding innovation and bringing social change efforts that work to scale. Among the many traits that make SFF unique is how it embodies this philosophy at its core.

* Coined by the [Whitman Institute](#), *trust-based philanthropy operates under the assumption that funder-grantee relationships are stronger when they are built on a foundation of trust.*

Financials

19 grants issued
\$74,820 total amount granted
32% job creation, 53% education (number of grants issued)
89% global, 11% US
92% to ultra poor by dollar amount

Impact Investments



Beneficial Returns is an impact investment fund designed to support the growth of leading social enterprises that operate in emerging markets worldwide.



Village Enterprise works to end extreme poverty in rural Africa through entrepreneurship and innovation.



Jibu’s mission is to ensure every person on the planet has access to a safe, affordable and sustainable water source. They currently work in East Africa.



WCCN (Working Capital for Community Needs) creates opportunities for access to microfinance, services, and markets to improve the lives and communities of the working poor in Latin America.

Thank you, Jasmine and Elisabeth

Honoring two retiring board members who just happen to be grandmother and granddaughter.—It's all in the family here at Skees Foundation, as our forty members convene to support innovative programs in education and job-creation in the U.S. and around the world.



Twenty-eight-year-old **Elisabeth Deogracias Tarullo**, daughter of Sandy Skees and Mary Talpas and wife of Mike Tarullo, graduated summa cum laude in environmental studies from New York University. She worked for two social enterprises, startup accelerator Venture for America and in-home eldercare Hometeam, before moving to Seattle to work for Amazon.

Having served on the SFF board as vice president of communications and grantee relations from 2013-2018, Elisabeth spearheaded the redesign of our annual reports, adding vivid photographs of partners and family members in action and clarifying our mission, financials, and news each year. She also invented our [Generational Grant](#) program, wherein family members collaboratively research and give grants every two years.

Our board remembers how Elisabeth rallied passionately for the smallest, often minority- and locally-led organizations with potential to scale: Adverse to throwing grant money at *symptoms*, she insisted on addressing *causes* of poverty and inequality at their root. She talks about what she's given to and gained from philanthropy in this [video](#). Elisabeth will now focus on her career and family but has offered to coach incoming family/board members who take a turn serving a term.

Eighty-four-year-old **Jasmine Panchot Skees** advised the foundation from its inception in 2004 and served on the board from 2009-2018. She will remain an emerita from the assisted-living facility in Dayton, Ohio where she still crochets prayer shawls for those with aching bodies and hearts and spends every day with her husband, Hugh.

She built a reputation as a “hugger” and earned the title “vice president of giving” because of her effusive affection for everyone around her. SFF Founder Suzanne fondly recalls Jasmine spending untold hours being a sounding board for new ideas on grants and procedures and a tireless champion of our homemade, Midwestern, middle-class style of giving.

Jasmine tapped her networks to bring such creative projects as a job-creation Laundromat in Appalachia, peace education for all ages in Dayton, and education support and job-readiness along via a restorative justice program for youth impacted by guns and gang violence in Chicago. She talks about what drives her to serve in [this video](#). Her legacy of giving will continue if we can just remember to, along with our grants, give lots of hugs to our nonprofit partners and family members!



My Job Book 2 Publishes March 12!

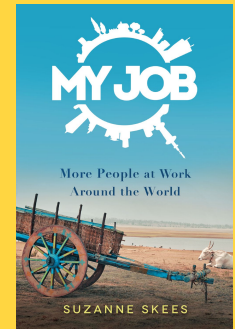
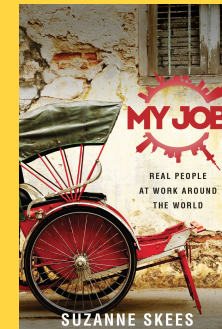
The second book in our social-mission series publishes on March 12 and features fifteen more revealing, first-person stories from folks of all ages and places working in health and recovery, education and finance, agribusiness and processing, tourism and culture, and diplomacy and peace. Get your copy [here](#), and catch up on *Book 1* [here](#).

All author proceeds fund job-creation programs to end poverty.

Join our [blog](#) to get behind-the-scenes news on book publishing and brand-new stories here, or to share wisdom from your work on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

“A collection of intimate interviews with people regarding the personal, familial, cultural, and geographic factors in their working lives . . . highly personal, often poignant, sometimes gritty, and inspiring . . . A vocational and sociological travelogue that readers will find to be time well spent.”

—[Kirkus](#)



Family Grants

Each year, our individual families have the opportunity to give to an organization that reflects their values. Family grants have become a unique way for Skees generations across the country to engage directly with nonprofits in their communities or support causes they're passionate about internationally.

Jasmine and Hugh



Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation works as an agent of reconciliation and healing with those in their community and Church who have been impacted by violence and conflict.

Sylvia-Gary Family



The Dragonfly Foundation brings comfort and joy to kids, young adults, and their families enduring cancer and bone marrow transplants.

Sandy-Mary Family



The Mini Mermaid Running Club teaches girls to lead a healthy life by listening to their inner voices, valuing their uniqueness, and learning to love movement.

The Tarullos



African Entrepreneur Collective is a collection of business accelerators that support local entrepreneurs to drive job growth.

Shelly-Ron Family; Bri and James



BESO Foundation works in rural Uganda to provide children with access to quality education and economically empower rural families to improve livelihoods.

Suzanne-Vince Family



Prosperity Catalyst develops and strengthens women-led businesses in distressed regions, providing business and technical training, creating opportunities for women to achieve economic and social empowerment.

Eddy Skees



The AIDS Lifecycle is aimed at reducing new HIV infections and improving the quality of life for people living with HIV/AIDS.

Ali and Landon; The Leskos



Project Hawai'i enhances the lives of homeless children throughout the year by providing interactive programs to help them escape the cycle of poverty.

Sally-Mike Family



Voix et Actions is geared toward the development of the Haitian community and the physical and moral relief of the disadvantaged people who live there.

Kris-Tony Family



The Charlotte Catholic High School Athletic Association works to serve and support our Student-Athletes and Coaches in their school.

Partners for Fiscal Years 2017-2018

Seed Grantees



African Entrepreneur Collective accomplished so much over the past few years. They've expanded their entrepreneurship programs to include refugees (over 800) and they've nearly doubled their impact since their start in 2012. They have also doubled their staff size in the last two years, most of whom are Rwandan and Burundian.



Educate Lanka continues to grow. Since 2017, they've partnered with MasterCard, expanded their programs pertaining to skills development and have focused a lot on international exchange opportunities. They've aided over 1,200 students and have over 20 institutional partnerships.



Resonate continues to blossom as an organization. Over the past two years, they have added a facilitator training program, increased their staff, and have reached thousands of new participants!



TYO is expanding their program selection to include an entrepreneurship program for graduate students and they are focusing on delivering many of these programs to refugee camps by sending their team to work directly with families.



Women LEAD added a very successful initiative to their curriculum, Young Women's Political Leadership Initiative, in 2017, and hosted an the OWN IT Summit in 2018. They have impacted over 2,500 youth in Nepal to date.

Partnership Grantees



AGE Africa grew tremendously in 2018. They gave over 240 scholarships this year and over 100 girls attended their 2018 All Scholars retreat. They also developed a new impact assessment program to determine their impact on girls in Malawi.



Agora has scaled their program impact, resulting in the creation of more than 3,000 jobs. They have opened a new office in Chile, and have an awesome new website! Although impacted by the political instability in Nicaragua in 2018, they carried on diligently with their work and were still able to affect change in the region.



GPI opened their 41st bureau in 2017, and plan for more in the coming years. They are launching the Global Press Style Guide for journalism, and they implemented a new financial sustainability strategy to diversify their revenue streams.



The School Fund has had a couple of hurdles to jump over the past two years, but they have done so with grace. They have hired a new executive director, made a short film about one of the students they supported, and have continued to provide scholarships for students all over Africa.

Catalyst Grantees



Anseye Pou Ayiti graduated their first class of cohorts in 2017, representing the official launch of their alumni program! They also modified and perfected their teacher training programs. Additionally, APA founder Nedgine Paul Deroly was named an Obama Fellow in 2018!



In the past two years, Medha has expanded and now works in over 12 districts and has doubled the number of students receiving internships. They revised their curriculum to use more experiential learning techniques and they have increased their full-time staff size from 20 staff members to 50.

Generational Grantees



Destiny Foundation grew tremendously in the past two years. They were named Global Social Benefit Institute's Accelerator Cohort for Social Enterprises, they increased the salaries of all their workers in India, and they partnered with Amazon through their women's empowerment initiative.



Voix et Actions expanded their Trouin Village Farm program to include fish in addition to the goats, pigs, and chickens. They also raised their number of women entrepreneurs served to over 50. Some of the Skees Family had the pleasure of visiting them in 2018 and were able to see the impact they have on their local community.



The Pearl Harbor Aviation Museum has increased the number of field trips and student visitors by nearly 15% in the past two years. They also implemented a STEM outreach program, which works with both domestic and international students. They also revamped their website and logo, changing their name from the Pacific Aviation Museum.



StrongMinds has been scaling rapidly, trying to come up with the most efficient model for reducing depression across Africa. They've consistently dropped the cost per patient while steadily increasing the number of women reached. They've more than doubled the number of women reached in the past two years.



Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation continues to have a huge impact among youth in underprivileged neighborhoods in Chicago. They have hosted numerous events and fundraisers while continuing their daily support for kids in their community.

Meet Our New 2019-2020 Grantees!

Seed Grantees



The mission of Bean Voyage is to provide training and market access to smallholder women so they can produce specialty coffee, earn a better income, and lead sustainable lives.

Costa Rica



CREA inspires Nicaraguans to empower themselves and their communities by providing educational resources.

Nicaragua



Idea4Africa's mission is to inspire and equip youth entrepreneurs to develop social and economic value for their communities and for the world.

Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania, and Ghana



KadAfrica's mission is to empower youth and smallholder farmers through the cultivation of passion fruit by equipping them with training, seedlings and agro inputs, and a ready market for increased incomes and improved quality of life.

Uganda



Women LEAD provides young women in Nepal with the skills, support, and opportunities to become leaders and change-makers in their schools, communities, nation, and world.

Nepal

Partnership Grantees



Anseye Pou Ayiti's mission is to raise education outcomes in disadvantaged areas in Haiti by recruiting and training outstanding teachers for existing schools.

Haiti



Agora Partnerships is an organization that is accelerating the shift to a more sustainable and equitable world through the visionary social impact entrepreneurs it supports.

Latin America and the Caribbean



Tomorrow's Youth Organization works in disadvantaged areas of the Middle East, enabling children, youth, and parents to realize their potential as healthy, active, and responsible family and community members.

Palestine

Catalyst Grantees



Educate Lanka empowers economically disadvantaged children and youth by enhancing their access to education, mentoring, and employment opportunities with long-term micro-scholarship funding and targeted guidance.

Sri Lanka



Resonate uses storytelling to build self-confidence and unlock leadership potential.

East Africa