



## Imprints Giving Circles

# ChesCo Community Imprints

*Make a Difference Today that Will Last Forever.*

### How Can I Make a Difference?

Consider joining an Imprints Giving Circle and make giving a part of your daily life. Sharing your charitable goals with others makes the experience more fulfilling and allows you to make a greater impact at an investment level that fits your personal needs and giving capacity.

### What is a Giving Circle?

A giving circle is a group of donors who place their charitable dollars into a pooled fund and decide as a group which charities to support. Giving circles enable donors to increase their engagement in the process of giving and the impact of their giving by working as a group.

Imprints Giving Circle members are asked to participate for a minimum of two years at an established dollar level. The funds are housed at the Chester County Community Foundation, whose staff members support the work of the Circles.

The giving focus and structure of the giving circles are decided by the members. Some giving circles choose to endow portions of their annual contribution to allow the fund to be established as a permanent giving fund. Giving Circles offer their members a chance to evaluate nonprofits firsthand via site visits and other volunteer activities, and provide a venue for discussion of broader issues related to philanthropy, such as financial planning.

Examples of giving circles include:

- ◇ Launched in 2002, The B'MORE Fund is a Giving Circle that supports and celebrates the work of social entrepreneurs. With over 45 members, this Giving Circle has made over \$35,000 in awards. Membership requires an annual contribution of \$500.
- ◇ The Seacoast Giving Circle has 60 members, who give a minimum \$200 donation toward the pooled fund and participate in volunteer projects selected by the members. The focus of giving changes depending on the priorities set by the members. Last year, the target for investment was "preventing risky behavior among teens ages 11 through 18," while in previous years they had tackled the environment and affordable housing and homelessness.
- ◇ The Jewish Women's Initiative has 34 members who each give \$1,000 per year for at least a two year commitment. Since they began in 2003, this Circle has distributed \$25,000 into the community.



## What are the Imprints Giving Circle Options?

This is a special opportunity to become a Giving Circle founding member:

- ◇ Imprints Seed Fund: Giving Circle Contribution of \$100/year for two years & Imprints membership
- ◇ Imprints Growth Fund: Giving Circle Contribution of \$500/year for two years & Imprints membership
- ◇ Imprints Impact Fund: Giving Circle Contribution of \$1000/year for two years & Imprints membership

## How Does the Imprints Giving Circle Work?

Each Giving Circle meets quarterly to welcome new members, discuss procedures and priorities, and make charitable giving decisions. Members discuss and decide:

1. **Goals and Structure:** Meeting schedule; how to determine the grantmaking focus; limit on the number of participants; time commitment.
2. **Focus Area:** Area to direct grants; site visit questions, research needed, speakers desired.
3. **Process for Making Funding Decisions:** What will be the criteria for determining which nonprofit receives grants? Will the group review grant proposals? Will the group visit specific nonprofits that could "qualify"? How will the group evaluate the impact of the grant funding?
4. **Potential Grant Recipients Review and Decision Process:** As a Giving Circle group, discuss the potential grant recipients and make a collective decision.
5. **Make Grant Award:** Inform the nonprofit recipient of the grant awarded by the Giving Circle.
6. **Follow Up:** Determine how to monitor the use of the grant and the grantee's work.

## What Can I Expect?

By joining an Imprints Giving Circle, you will have opportunities to:

- ◇ Connect with like-minded peers
- ◇ Increase your community involvement
- ◇ Engage in professional and strategic networking
- ◇ Involve your children and instill the values of giving and learning
- ◇ Increase the impact of your charitable dollars
- ◇ Direct your donations to the causes that matter to you
- ◇ Enjoy yourself – have meaningful conversations in enjoyable ways



Giving Circles are a growing form of philanthropy. Recent studies show that giving circles:

- ◇ Increase members' knowledge about philanthropy, nonprofits and the community
- ◇ Influence members to give more strategically
- ◇ Increase members' engagement in civic activities outside of the Giving Circle
- ◇ Amplify your charitable giving and your connections in the community

## Interested?

Contact **ChesCo Community Imprints**, [www.chescocf.org](http://www.chescocf.org), [info@chescocf.org](mailto:info@chescocf.org) (610) 696-8211  
28 W. Market Street, West Chester, PA 19382