



Stu News Laguna

Stu Saffer's Laguna Beach News and Community Forum



What is a Community Foundation?

Q & A with Laguna Beach Community Foundation Board Chair Rick Balzer and Founding Chair Laura Tarbox

Prepared by LBCF



Can you share your particular experience and passion that helps you lead the Laguna Beach Community Foundation?

Rick: Laguna is a very special town. We are known around the world for our scenic coastline, charming architecture and a thriving arts community. Our town is held in high regard and I feel so fortunate that my family moved here many years ago. Laguna also has a cultural fabric that is very broad. It is a combination of these traits that has been such a significant influence on my life. It is my hope that many generations will follow and be able to experience the uniqueness of this wonderful community.

What is the role of a Community Foundation?

Rick: Community Foundations bring together financial resources of individuals, families, private foundations and businesses to create charitable funds. The Community Foundation in turn invests and administers those funds through grants and other charitable support. The Laguna Beach Community Foundation (LBCF) provides leadership and support to Laguna Beach nonprofits that ultimately improves lives and our immediate community and beyond.

Talk about your personal/professional backgrounds and the path that created the Laguna Beach Community Foundation (LBCF)?

Laura: I have lived in Laguna Beach since 1980 and envisioned a Community Foundation in this community from the beginning. My involvement in LBCF allows me to connect my passions with many local nonprofits through one organization. I've learned about many additional nonprofit groups in town doing great work that I didn't know about before.

Professionally, I own a wealth management firm and help my clients meet their charitable giving goals through various giving strategies, so this has been an area of interest to me for many years.

Rick: I was raised in Laguna Beach and have worked in this community my entire life. I've been in the real estate business since 1968 and have witnessed many changes in both the housing market and in the socioeconomic makeup of our community.

The Laguna Beach Community Foundation was founded by Michael Pinto, Mary Fegraus, Wayne Peterson and Peter Kote in 2004. I joined four years later because I wanted to get involved in Laguna on a philanthropic level and the Community Foundation offers me the chance to give back to the town that nurtured my life.

What are three key benefits of the LBCF in the Laguna Beach community?

Rick: An important common denominator that we all share at the LBCF is a great love of Laguna Beach and a deep concern for its future. We encourage the philosophy of 'give where you live' and connect our donors with local nonprofits that speak to their philanthropic interests. Last year we facilitated 72 grants totaling \$408,000 and since 2010, we've delivered over \$2.7 million in grants to nonprofits both locally and nationally.

Another key element to LBCF is establishing and maintaining charitable funds which are managed by LBCF's volunteer investment committee. We reported earlier this year that 2013 returns on the investment pool exceeded our projected goals by 15%.

We can manage special memorial funds or disaster relief efforts and we provide local nonprofits with professional workshops to support their organizations' growth and progress.



Rick Balzer and Laura Tarbox

What are the specific benefits for a donor joining the LBCF?

Laura: Donors who work with LBCF have the choice of many different vehicles to help carry out their charitable goals. For instance, they can donate to a specific cause or organization or contribute to the greater Laguna Beach community as a whole. Donor-advised funds can be established to allow donors to direct funds to charities of their choice throughout the year.

Can you talk about a current challenge facing your organization?

Rick: Although we were founded in 2004, we have not been widely known until recently. Our current board of trustees is energized and committed to have the Laguna Beach Community Foundation broaden its visibility and reach its true potential. It is our great desire for LBCF to be a recognized community resource and an integral part of the fabric of our town.

Can you talk about the future of the organization?

Rick: I believe our organization will continue to play a dynamic role in the health of the nonprofits and the thousands of individuals they serve. We aim to bring greater awareness of the services we offer to both donors and to the growing number nonprofit organizations.

Laura: As LBCF moves into its second decade, we are excited about becoming more pro-active in promoting philanthropy focused on specific areas of interest, such as the environment or the arts. We hope to engage Lagunans in helping to envision how our special community can be even better and then help to get us there.

If someone in our local professional community would like to get involved - what are the various opportunities to joining the Laguna Beach Community Foundation?

Laura: Local professionals, such as CPAs, attorneys and financial advisors can join our Professional Council and participate in continuing education sessions as well as networking events.

Donors of varying levels can set up Donor Advised Funds with an investment of either cash or noncash assets such as publicly traded stocks, bonds, mutual funds, privately held stocks or all forms of non-liquid real estate.

It's a great way to connect, learn, have fun and benefit our community!

To learn more, call 949.715.8223 or visit www.lagunabeachcf.org.

<http://www.stunewslaguna.com/index.php/component/content/article/11570-what-is-a-community-foundation-041114>