

Today's Presentation

Program: Best Practices in Philanthropy, Nonprofits, and Foundations

Speaker: Jeff Rasley

Sponsored by: Jeff Rasley

Introduced by: Jeff Rasley

Attendance: 86

Guests: Todd Stockwell

Scribe: Don Mink

Editor: Joe Abella

Jeff Rasley introduced the presentation by defining philanthropy as Brotherly/Sisterly Love (philos) of Humanity (anthropos). The ancient Hebrews provided the earliest guidance in Deuteronomy 15: "A community must deal with poverty" and, "At the end of every seven years every creditor shall release what he has lent to his neighbor; he shall not exact it of his neighbor, his brother, because the LORD's release has been proclaimed." This is the origin of bankruptcy law.

Plato's Republic (380 BCE) envisioned the ideal state (city-state): There will be no need of philanthropy as welfare, because all citizens will have gainful employment which fits their particular talents. This required an educated populace, fair and strict judicial system, a specially educated ruling class, and a Philosopher-King at the top.

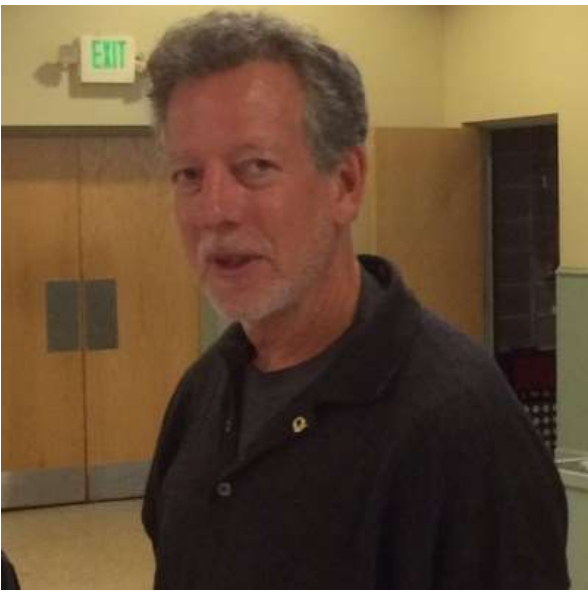
The Christian obligation of "Love your neighbor as yourself" found in the Good Samaritan story is the Christian implementation of philanthropy. Many modern ethicists consider "the love ethic" to express the highest level of ethical development, i.e., to live like Jesus, Gandhi, or King, willing to sacrifice self for others. A less idealistic view is that pairing the self with neighbor implies the need for balance; to take care of the self first and then to help others in need.

The enlightened modern response to "Why do Philanthropy?" is: Develop infrastructure with cultural sensitivity that meets basic needs for any and all to live decently and have the opportunity to thrive,

but requires mutual investment from donors and recipients to be sustainable ("handouts" only for emergencies) ("teach to fish").

Jeff led a general discussion on The Sciencetech Club Foundation. The Foundation distributes about \$100,000 per year with income generated through investments and Sciencetech Club member donations, bequests, and memorial gifts. The Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization; donations are fully tax-deductible. The presentation listed a dozen uses of grants and program support. In addition, the Foundation provides program support for individual teacher needs (e.g. microscopes), funds a Teachers Institute which provides science teachers with renewed understanding of the content of the classroom material, and last year provided a \$10,000 grant for equipment at the Abraham Lincoln Elementary School. Fifty-two percent of Sciencetech Club members made donations to the Foundation in 2016, a big increase from thirty-eight percent in 2015.

The "power of volunteering" has been documented for the last 2,500 plus years. However a slew of recent research is shedding even more light onto its surprising benefits. Science now proves what great leaders and philosophers have known for years: "*One of the great ironies of life is this: He or she who serves almost always benefits more than he or she who is served.*" – Gordon Hinckle



Sciencetech Member Jeff Rasley