

Donors Speak Out:



Ellen Bush:

Why I give to Fund for Idaho

Fund for Idaho is working on things that are meaningful to me in a place that is meaningful to me.

You could say I'm a "wannabe" Idahoan. I lived in Boise in the 1980s. As I drove around the state, I fell in love with the place. At that time I became aware of social justice and equality issues in Idaho, and I saw isolation and cultural racism, but I wasn't actively doing anything about it politically.

Then I moved to Latin America in the 1990s. As a member of the Sisters of the Holy Cross, I was involved in labor organizing in Brazil. I worked with displaced farmers who were promised jobs and ended up in urban slums and with women who washed clothes for other people. They were marginalized and unaware of their rights to form unions and sign up for social security. As we did skits to reach illiterate people at outreach meetings, I got a lot more politicized.

After returning to the United States and leaving the order, my partner, Kathryn Whitney Stephens, and I lived in Fresno, Calif., where she worked with AIDS patients and started the Whitney Foundation. We wanted to come back to Idaho and eventually built a vacation home here, where we spent as much time as we could until she passed away in 2005.

We met with Fund for Idaho directors in 2003, not long after the Fund began. We found that we shared the same vision of philanthropy: Grants would not fund direct services, but rather would support only those programs that develop self-determination and self-reliance.

Fund for Idaho fulfills a mission that other Idaho public foundations don't: providing support to organizations working for transformative change. To think that something like this could even start in Idaho is amazing!



Christopher Hormel:

Why I give to Fund for Idaho

Fund for Idaho is the only Idaho-based 501(c)(3) public foundation focused on serving the grass-roots Idaho groups working for tolerance, justice and environmental and economic sustainability.

We are all in this together. Life is not sustainable in a world divided between haves and have-nots, a place where the haves must defend their lion's share of resources ever more aggressively, and the have-nots lose hope for the future. The principles of compassion, mutual respect and justice must be part of any effort to make our world a better place.

Donors to Fund for Idaho empower those most affected by the injustice and inequity in our society by encouraging them to make their voices heard. The power of our grants, now totaling over \$120,000, is being felt, little by little, in many Idaho communities, as people use these resources to organize, counter the forces of intolerance and build a more civil and just society.

Fund for Idaho walks its talk. Social change activists help run this foundation and sit on the grantmaking committee that decides where donors' gifts should be applied. This is a radical departure from traditional, more "comfortable" philanthropy, where money is given but power is not.

Now entering its seventh year, Fund for Idaho is committed to being here for the long haul. By supporting Fund for Idaho, I become part of a family of like-minded people who support REAL democracy and believe that a just and civil society IS possible.