



VIRGINIA G. PIPER CHARITABLE TRUST Press Release
March 19, 2021

Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust Achieves \$500 Million Milestone and Presses Forward on Grantmaking Legacy

PHOENIX, Ariz.—Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust, a private foundation that honors the legacy of Virginia Galvin Piper, recently surpassed a grantmaking milestone of investing more than \$500 million since its inception (21 years ago) in nonprofits and programs that enhance the lives of people in Maricopa County. The half-billion-dollar investment is made possible by Virginia Piper’s endowment of \$590 million and strong fiscal stewardship that puts the Trust in an excellent position to continue its unique, regional philanthropic legacy.

Piper Trust’s investments in organizations and initiatives that enrich health, well-being, and opportunity for the people of Maricopa County have significant economic and social impact. Since it began awarding grants in 2000, the Trust has focused on healthcare and medical research, children, older adults, arts and culture, education, and religious organizations.

According to staff director and senior researcher at the L. William Seidman Research Institute, W. P. Carey School of Business, Arizona State University, Dr. Anthony Evans, the economic impact of \$500 million+ philanthropic dollars on Maricopa County (granted over 20+ years) is estimated at more than 4,015 job years of employment; more than \$213.1 million in labor income; and, more than \$495.3 million in total contribution to the state’s gross domestic product (GDP).

“These economic impacts are a significant but nevertheless conservative estimate of Piper Trust’s total contribution to Maricopa County. These numbers don’t factor in social impact—things like the numbers of people who have benefited from health, human services, or educational programs funded by the Trust; or the number of arts and culture initiatives that have improved the quality of life within the local community,” Dr. Evans said. “If we could accurately measure all of those things, the absolute impact of the Trust’s support for nonprofits and programs over the last 20 years could be at least double or triple the GDP impact.”

Strengthening the region’s nonprofit sector is a core investment strategy of Piper Trust. Strong nonprofits are key to building community resilience.

“Nonprofits have a profound and immeasurable influence on individual lives, families, and communities, and it’s impossible to fully quantify the level of impact the sector has on our region,” said Chris Camacho, president and CEO of the Greater Phoenix Economic Council. “Nonprofits serve as a critical frontline multiplier alongside the public sector in meeting the needs of our community that can’t be accomplished by any one domain alone. Piper Trust’s dedication to grantmaking in Greater Phoenix allows that multiplier effect to take hold by providing a hand up to our region’s most vulnerable which impacts present and future trajectories.”

Typically the Trust awards approximately \$22 million annually to Maricopa County nonprofits. The past year has not been a typical one as the Trust has awarded more than \$37 million, much of it a response to COVID-19.

“It is an honor to carry out Virginia Piper’s legacy through the endowment that she graciously left to this community that she loved. We are so grateful for the stewardship of our Trustees and the exceptional financial advisement of the Trust’s dedicated external investment committee members—Jeffrey Coles, Jacque Millard, and Kent Misener—this collective leadership has helped our corpus remain strong and resilient for the future,” said Mary Jane Rynd, president and CEO, Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust

A [\\$10 million grant](#) to Creighton University for a medical partnership with The Society of St. Vincent de Paul (SVdP) to expand medical education, training, and clinical practice pushed Piper Trust’s grantmaking beyond the \$500 million mark. This grant will support a transformational collaboration between Creighton University and SVdP in Phoenix, which will provide improved access and quality care to those most in need while growing skilled medical professionals for Arizona. The partnership is designed to reduce growing health disparities that disproportionately affect low-income populations and people of color.

“I think Virginia Piper would be so proud that the Trust reached this poignant \$500 million milestone through the \$10 million grant award to Creighton University for its collaboration with St. Vincent de Paul—this dynamic medical partnership will enrich our community in ways we don’t even realize yet,” said Rynd.

“We’re incredibly fortunate for a partner like Piper Trust who shares Creighton’s deep commitment to make the world a better place, especially for those in the community who are vulnerable and underserved,” said Creighton President the Rev. Daniel S. Hendrickson, SJ, PhD. “Their thoughtful and generous gift will have a positive and lasting impact on the accessibility of healthcare in Phoenix for years to come.”

“We are deeply grateful for the generosity of Piper Trust that has not only helped us grow and expand our charitable outreach in Maricopa County these past 20 years but also given us access to unmatched educational opportunities and leadership development through Piper Academies and the Piper Fellows Program,” said Shannon Clancy, SVdP Associate CEO. “Our organization would not be the largest St. Vincent de Paul in the country if not for Virginia Piper’s legacy of kindness, compassion, and love that Piper Trust has continued to honor over many years.”

“This Creighton University-St. Vincent de Paul partnership holds immense promise for the health and health outcomes of the people of Maricopa County, Arizona, and beyond. These organizations know that by leveraging collaborations and expertise—our community can be a model for improving access and reducing inequities in healthcare,” said Rynd.

Trust support can range from modest-size to multi-million dollar investments through both responsive and Trust-Initiated grantmaking. For example, in 2013 a \$20,000 grant to Xico, Inc. supported a feasibility study that resulted in the creation of culturally-specific lithography arts programming for youth; in 2017, a \$1.4 million grant to First Place AZ supported pre-development and construction of a facility for special populations which has grown into a world-renowned model of residential living for neurodiverse individuals. Additional thematic investments include:

Community Response in Real Time—while the Trust is a place-based foundation grounded in strategy, the Trust responds in the moment when communities are in need. Since inception, the Trust awarded more than \$35 million to support crisis situations such as:

- In response to the Great Recession, 89 organizations received \$6.5 million to aid during the economic downturn (2008-2011).
- Community emergencies such as immediate relief during heat waves, fire, or nonprofit crisis were awarded \$1.7 million (2005-2017).
- In response to the migrant crises of 2017-2018, the Trust supported the establishment of the Phoenix Welcome Center for Asylum-Seeking Families, which provides comprehensive and coordinated services for families with pending asylum status.
- Since January 2020, the Trust awarded \$27.4 million in grants initiated by the Trust to support 135 nonprofits during to the COVID-19 crisis.

Nonprofit Capacity Building—truly partnering alongside nonprofits, allowing them to step back and step out in ways that can strengthen them for the long-term such as:

- The Piper Fellows Program—now 81 Fellows strong representing 60 organizations; the program supports nonprofit leaders with opportunities to retool and revitalize through self-designed professional development plans that can include in-depth learning at renowned educational institutions, site visits, and grants that help implement learnings.
- Trust-initiated projects that strengthen the effectiveness of organizations through ATLAS—designed to fortify the organizational and operational structures of a nonprofit by equipping them with innovative management tools, and AGILE—designed for mid-sized arts organizations to examine their “capacity + capitalization” so they become more nimble and effectively carry out their missions in any circumstance. To date, the Trust has invested \$13.8 million in the ATLAS and AGILE programs that have supported 44 nonprofit organizations.
- Good Governance Project—Boards of Directors play a significant role in organizational strength. The Good governance Project focuses on the intentional development of board leadership through programming and small grants. The Trust has supported more than 100 grantees through this project since 2013.
- Piper Academies—since 2002, the Trust has hosted more than 50 Piper Academies featuring renowned thought leaders such as Angela Duckworth, David Grant, and Hilda Polanco. These special convenings for grantee organization leaders, board members, and volunteers provide in-depth and actionable learning; convenings are designed with a specific aspect of organizational capacity building in mind such as financial management or new approaches to impact assessment.

Piper Trust grantmaking by core area (December 2000 to March 2021):



*Time Period: December 2000 to March 2021

About Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust:

Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust supports organizations that enrich health, well-being, and opportunity for the people of Maricopa County, Arizona. Since it began awarding grants in 2000, Piper Trust has invested more than \$512 million in local nonprofits and programs. Piper Trust grantmaking areas are healthcare and medical research, children, older adults, arts and culture, education, and religious organizations. For more information: visit pipertrust.org | [@PiperTrust](https://www.facebook.com/PiperTrust) | [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/PiperTrust).

Review Piper Trust's Annual Financial Report: Fiscal Year Ending March 2020 at: [FY20 Financial/Grants Report](#).

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