PERSONAL LEGACY

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Mapping your Genome of Generosity

If you are holding this resource in your hands -- or reading the online guide -- you have started down a path to plan the ultimate charitable gift - a bequest in your Will.

My work for over two decades has been serving generous, kind, thoughtful people who have given to charities all of their lives, and to do so as part of their estate plan. It's been a privilege and joy to walk alongside people who believe in the power of partnering with a charity to change the world, care for humanity, advance education, innovation and so much more.

The Canadian Donor's Guide has been part of that journey for thousands of Canadians and their estate advisors. One of my favourite things about observing how people use this guide is when they realize that dividing up everything they have on Earth (after all, we can't take it with us) and using Canada's generous tax incentives in their planning means everyday citizens can give away so much more than they thought. I'm no scientist but I'm hearing from so many healthcare leaders that the future of medicine is bespoke, customized and more holistically fit for the individual. Giving and generosity are moving in this direction too. But how many Canadians spend the time to think about the change they want to make? To which organizations are they giving and whom do they feel can carry their vision into the future?

That's the superpower of this guide. Here are three ways to get the most out of it:

There have been incredible advancements -- even at charities you thought you knew. It's time to go deeper. Reach out to the charity contact in this guide. Ask about the work you've been supporting and how your bequest might not only fund the present but create more opportunities tomorrow and forever. Please know that you can do this confidentially and you can ask for anonymity. This is more common in what we know is a very personal consideration about what you have worked so hard for all your life. Many Canadians are thinking about evolved ways to incorporate social, racial, gender and environmental justice into their giving. Even more are asking how their giving can be a part of reconciliation with the first peoples of this land. Canada's charities are thinking about this too. Even more charities are thinking about how to collaborate with social-enterprise and small-business to think smarter and do better. Contact your favourite charity and ask about the priorities that mean something to you and your family.

Your advisor can help! In 2022, more advisors are certified as Master Financial Advisors in Philanthropy or MFA-Ps. a new designation in our community that our team at CAGP co-launched with the Knowledge Bureau and Spire Philanthropy to help your advisor be a better partner in planning your giving. Today for tax; tomorrow as part of your financial plan; and, in the future as part of your estate plan. For the many reading this who are part of generous families, consider using this guide as part of that conversation. Many Canadians don't have this powerful family conversation to move from what 'I give' to what 'we can do' as a family. Creating a family vision of multi-generational values is a growing strategy that we are hearing is bringing joy and meaning to families across the nation.

You are part of a global movement to activate the personal legacy of every Canadian! Have you heard about WillPower.ca? It's a movement to support all people in this journey of life, legacy and personal meaning. You are doing something deeply meaningful here. Please know there are many supports as you think about this powerful way to tell your life story with your generosity.

So, please, dream bigger! Explore more organizations and give yourself the gift of letting your giving speak for your heart, mind and vison for your community, our country and the world.

Paul Nazareth has worked in Canada's philanthropic sector for over 20 years. Currently, Vice President, Education & Development at the Canadian Association of Gift Planners (CAGP) and was previously VP at the charity CanadaHelps. Paul has been a philanthropic advisor with a national wealth management firm in a trust company and spent 15 years working with charities from universities to churches. Paul is a board member of several charities including The Circle on Indigenous Philanthropy and the Advisory Council of Carleton University's Masters in Philanthropy and Non-profit Leadership program. He serves as faculty for the Master Financial Advisor in Philanthropy (MFA-P) program led by CAGP, Knowledge Bureau and Spire Philanthropy and is a frequent instructor for the tax and advisor community with organizations like CPA, Advocis and Estate Planning Councils.