



philanthropy in american history

purpose • To increase participants' understanding of the word philanthropy and its role in America's history

time 50 minutes

group size Up to 20 to 25 participants

materials • Flip chart
• Markers
• People cards
• Story cards
• Handout (optional): Philanthropy in American History (pg.190-194).

prepare ahead Prepare People and Story cards on index cards or small pieces of paper. Write the definition of philanthropy on a sheet of flip chart paper. (pg.186-189).

trainer note: For further preparation for this activity, the trainer can use the Philanthropy in American History background information handout.

section four: philanthropy: a new arena



introduction

Write the word “PHILANTHROPY” at the top of a sheet of flip chart paper. Ask the group to call out what they think of when they hear the word and record responses on a flip chart sheet. If necessary, prompt them with questions such as, “What kinds of people are involved in philanthropy? What kind of actions do you think of?”

After a few minutes, stop and review their list. Explain that people use the word philanthropy to mean different things. For some people, the work makes them think of the people who donate lots of money, like those who built schools or libraries or museums. For others, it might mean people who give their time to help others, like Mother Theresa or Cesar Chavez. Philanthropy includes all of those acts, but it doesn’t have to be as big as funding a new university or devoting your whole life to serving the sick and poor. It is something that we all can do, every day.

Underneath PHILANTHROPY, write this definition: “Thoughtful, intentional, and ongoing giving of one’s time, talent, and treasure for the common good.” With the group, go back and look at each of the words in the definition to be sure that everyone understands the definition and why each word gives meaning to the whole. Explain that this is the definition that will be used in the training sessions.

trainer note: Below are some definitions and key concepts in the definition of philanthropy:

Thoughtful: Participants have considered and have decided that something is important to them.

Intentional: The effort is focused on a particular area that the giver cares about.

Ongoing: The effort doesn’t happen just once, but throughout life.

Time: This is our most valuable commodity.

Talent: Talent consists of our unique skills, knowledge, and abilities.

Treasure: Treasure consists of our finances and materials.



section four: philanthropy: a new arena

philanthropy in history

Explain that the idea of philanthropy has a long history that begins with Judaic idea of Tzedakah and the Greek idea of philanthropy. Both of these ideas emphasized helping the community and the needy and grew with the advent of the Christian era and the Muslim religion. In the Middle Ages, philanthropic concepts made the leap from religious arenas to the public policy arena when Elizabeth I of England enacted the Poor Laws (see History handout) in the 16th century and added the idea of social justice to philanthropy. The founders of the United States brought these ideas with them and broadened them. Early philanthropy in America evolved around neighbor helping neighbor. With the coming of the Industrial Age, many families amassed vast fortunes in the steel, railroad, and coal businesses. These families became the first major philanthropic donors in the United States, and their giving habits are the reason why so many people think philanthropy only involves giving large sums of money. You've probably heard many of their names: Carnegie, Rockefeller, Kellogg, Ford, and Lilly. All of these families established large foundations to continue their philanthropy for generations.

And that brings us to today, where we have unprecedented opportunities to help each other through charitable organizations, to learn and share through the Internet, and to give to causes both next door and across the planet. Modern philanthropists, such as Bill Gates, Oprah Winfrey, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Ryan White, highlight the importance of sharing our time, talent, and treasure to improve the common good. And now, we take our place on the philanthropic timeline.

step one

Shuffle the People and Story cards and have each participant choose one card.

trainer note: If you have only a few participants, each participant may pick two cards.

section four: philanthropy: a new arena



Tell the group that they are going to play a matching game to help them remember some of the famous philanthropists from yesterday and today. Each person receives a People or Story card. Tell them to hold the card in front of them, chest high, and walk around the room searching for their match. They can go up to anyone to get information about their card and see if they can discover their match.

trainer note: You may provide hints to participants having trouble finding their match. Keep a copy of the handout, uncut, to help participants. After 15 minutes, halt the game and separate the “matches” from the participants who have not found their matches. Ask the matches to read the story and then give the name. If correct, move to the next match. If incorrect, put them back into the group with the non-matches. Ask the entire group to help match the remaining People cards with the Story cards.

step two

Lead the group in discussion by asking the following questions:

- How did you determine your match?
- What was easy about matching? What was hard?
- What did you learn today about philanthropy or about some of the philanthropists of the past? What did they share?
- How did some of the philanthropists we discussed make a difference in their communities? How were they intentional, or focused, in their giving?
- Can you think of any people you know, youth or adults, whom you would consider to be philanthropists? What do they do that makes them philanthropists?
- Do you think most youth and adults know enough about philanthropy and its role in our society? How can we help others understand philanthropy better?



step three

Suggest to the participants that as a follow up to this exercise, they could research other local philanthropists and their stories, possibly by talking to their local librarian about the books available at the library about these famous philanthropists. Participants can create other People and Story cards to share this exercise with a younger age group (e.g., children ages 5 to 11). As a group project, have them take the cards to a classroom or Sunday school room and have the children play.

Variations

variation one: The matching activity can be made more interactive through role-playing, either in partners or in a group. The trainer will hand out the Person and Story cards to the person who will be role-playing; the participant then acts out the Story card. Others guess until they figure out who the philanthropist is. Repeat until all cards have been used.

variation two: Assign a philanthropist's name or description of a person to each participant and ask him or her to research the philanthropist on the Internet or through books. At the next meeting, participants can report back to the group on their assignments or use the matching game.

variation three: The trainer can also have participants discover their own family tree of philanthropists. Participants start by asking their parents what they have done related to giving their time, talent, and treasure; then they ask their grandparents and their extended family. They can illustrate their findings by creating a family tree illustrated with pictures and writings of the philanthropic events. Alternatively, the group could create an organizational tree of philanthropy that is based on the history of their organization.

people and story cards - a handout

<p>I founded a company that produced a line of beauty products for black women. I was America's first black female millionaire. I made many charitable contributions to the black community and specified in my will that my company continue such philanthropy after my death. Who am I?</p>	<p>Madame C.J. Walker</p>
<p>I was a rich industrialist in the late 19th and early 20th century. By the time of my death, I had given away \$350,695,653. To this day, many libraries and educational institutions still bear my name. I also wrote a book about my philosophy of philanthropy, titled, "Wealth." Who am I?</p>	<p>Andrew Carnegie</p>
<p>I spent most of my long life as a nun ministering to the poorest of the poor in Calcutta, India. Even before my death in 1997, people had been considering that I might become a saint by the Catholic Church. Who am I?</p>	<p>Mother Theresa</p>
<p>Best known as a heartthrob of Melrose Place, I used my star status to found "Do Something," a non-profit youth organization. Its Mission Statement reads, "We inspire young people to believe that change is possible, and we train, fund, and mobilize them to be leaders who measurably strengthen their communities." Who am I?</p>	<p>Andrew Shue</p>
<p>Despite adulthood documented by the media and a messy divorce from a prince, I am perhaps, best loved for my charitable efforts which included AIDS work and an effort to ban the use of land mines. Who am I?</p>	<p>Princess Diana</p>
<p>Best known as an outspoken media mogul, owner of the Atlanta Braves and CNN Broadcasting, I recently pledged \$1 billion to the United Nations. Who am I?</p>	<p>Ted Turner</p>

<p>As a former United States President, I have become highly regarded in recent years for my work with Habitat for Humanity and my efforts to promote peace and justice around the world. Who am I?</p>	<p>Jimmy Carter</p>
<p>After many failed business ventures, I finally found success with a simple chocolate bar. I founded a community in Pennsylvania to provide homes for my employees. One of my favorite philanthropic endeavors was a home and school for orphan boys that I founded and supported for many years. Who am I?</p>	<p>Milton S. Hershey</p>
<p>For the last 10 years, I have been at the top of the talk show ratings. I have been vocal about wanting to steer clear of trashy topics and have a positive effect on my viewers. I have tried to encourage reading through my book club and encourage philanthropy through my Angel Network. Who am I?</p>	<p>Oprah Winfrey</p>
<p>During my lifetime, I was committed to the cause of Civil Rights. I fought segregation, even went to jail for my beliefs. I led the March on Washington and my "I Have a Dream" speech has served as a rallying cry for the Civil Rights Movement. Who am I?</p>	<p>Martin Luther King, JR.</p>
<p>I am the founder of Barrios Unidos in Santa Cruz, CA. My organization is transforming the lives of Latino youth in 27 cities by providing skills and leadership development opportunities and jobs. These youth began a silk-screening business and the proceeds from the business help fund their initiatives. I am proudest of Cesar Chavez School for Social Change, named for a famous philanthropist. Who am I?</p>	<p>Nane Alegandrez</p>

<p>I was a fourteen-year-old illiterate gang member who drug trafficked and started a gang of my own. In prison, I met a “lifer” who taught me how to read. When I was released , I started “X-HOODS”, an organization, which worked with young people to “X” out all the bad elements in themselves and their community. I now go to law school, am the Director of the YMCA, and founder of the Boston Urban Edge’s Youth Police Partnership. Who am I?</p>	<p>Will Morales</p>
<p>I am one of the youngest players on the professional golf circuit. My hope is to “change the face of golf by bringing the spirit of diversity” through involving inner-city youth in golf clinics. I started my own foundation, which sponsors these clinics throughout the country. Who am I?</p>	<p>Tiger Woods</p>
<p>I come from a very famous family. We have had lots of tragedy in the family including a sister who was mentally challenged. Therefore I am proudest of the establishment of the Special Olympics. Over one million people have participated from 130 countries in this event. Who am I?</p>	<p>Eunice Kennedy Shriver</p>
<p>My husband is better known than I am. He has been leading television star and stand-up comedian for many years. We both have a strong belief in education for all children. To that end, we have given money to several colleges and have provided scholarships for over 60 students to attend college. We both speak on behalf of the importance of gaining an education and both of us have received honorary doctorates for this work. Who are we?</p>	<p>Bill and Camille Cosby</p>

<p>Big Bird, Ernie and Elmo are my friends. They help me provide wholesome television for pre-school children. I am the founder of the Popular Children’s Television Workshop and the creator of “Sesame Street.” Who am I?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Joan Ganz Cooney</p>
<p>I hope to win an Oscar some day for a leading performance in a movie. Until then, I keep busy with films and with my volunteer work. I am currently serving as the spokesperson for the Boys and Girls Clubs of America. I do this because I was a member of a club. In addition, I support the Nelson Mandela Children’s Fund and a home for people with AIDS. Who am I?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Denzel Washington</p>
<p>“Touch ‘em all: Teammates for Kids” is the name of my foundation. I have organized a group of major league baseball players, entertainers, and corporations to come together and support causes for kids. You may know me by my black cowboy hat I wear when I perform. Who am I?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Garth Brooks</p>
<p>My wife and I are two of the finest actors in the country. We are considered to be philanthropists – she in the Arts, especially ballet and with causes for children. I fund my efforts by selling salad dressings, sauces, and popcorn. My charitable contributions since 1981 have accumulated to over 80 million dollars. Who are we?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward</p>
<p>I am cuddly, funny and have big feet . I tell stories to children about caring and sharing. Some people say that I am the first person to talk to children about helping the family and community. If you love the color purple, you’ll love me! Who am I?</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Barney</p>

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background information

a lesson in philanthropy

The headwaters of the river began before the birth of Christ with the Judaic idea of charity and the Roman idea of philanthropy. Both of these ideas emphasize helping the community and the needy.

The river became broader and wider with the advent of the Christian Era, which added new components to the word, charity, as it joined the stream of philanthropy. The Muslim religion joined the river and it continued its flow through the Middle Ages. It was Elizabeth I of England in the late 16th Century who gave life to the river's movement. She enacted Poor Laws and added the idea of social justice to the ideas of charity and philanthropy. Her Poor Laws required the government of a nation to step in to help fill the needs of the poor. The people who founded America brought the ideas of charity, philanthropy, and social justice with them. They widened the world river even further. Early philanthropy evolved around neighbor helping neighbor. Neighbors cared for each other's needs, such as building a new barn if one burned down or helping to plant crops when the farmer was injured.

As the United States moved into the Industrial Age, many families amassed vast fortunes in the steel, railroad, and coal business. These were the USA's first major philanthropists and also the reason why so many think "philanthropy" only involves the giving of money. You will hear about several of these early philanthropists such as Andrew Carnegie who stated, "the millionaire will be but a trustee for the poor." Names such as Rockefeller, Ford, Lilly, and Kellogg established large foundations to provide a systemic process for helping those in need. These foundations are some of the largest in the world today.

At this juncture in history, philanthropy encounters a tremendous opportunity to improve the quality of life for many individuals and organizations. Within the next 20 years, there will be an unprecedented transfer of \$10.4 TRILLION from one generation to the next. In the United States today there are more millionaires than there ever have been in the history of this country, and the communications, computer and other high-tech industries will create many more before the close of the millennium. Think about those that you know: Bill and Melinda Gates, Ted Turner, Michael Jordan, Oprah Winfrey, Tiger Woods, Steven Jobs, and Michael Dell. The training you are receiving will assist you to become a "philanthropist." Not just in the "money-giving" aspect but also in giving your time and talent. Think about others you know who have done that: Mother Teresa, Cesar Chavez, Martin Luther King Junior, Ryan White and Helen Keller. YOU as Philanthropist are the purpose of the training.

Get ready to be a part of History!

history of philanthropy

19th Century Roots

Kindness, generosity, and concern for the welfare of others have been a part of the religious and social inheritance taught to children throughout the ages. In the United States' earliest days, Americans looked to the children to "assure that democratic values would prosper." Some of the earliest efforts included school and church education and education of the youth work force. These efforts encouraged youth to give of their time (extra chores at home and for neighbors), talent (knitting or sewing for bazaars and fairs) and treasure (contributing part of their wages).

By the 1830's, social change was sweeping the country. Youth participated in adult organizations, but soon began to organize and lead their own organizations. The largest of these was the Cold Water Army, which advocated for temperance. It might be said that the Cold Water Army was the precursor to the "Just Say No" movement of today. Many of the groups who began during this time moved into the churches and many of the youth-led groups were disbanded. In the 1880's, the important new development was in religious youth work. The original group, the Society for Christian Endeavor, included missionary work and community service efforts; however, community service soon took a back seat to service to the denomination and local church.

20th Century Progress

By looking at the Timeline, we can see that many youth organizations began in the early 1900's. More young people had free time and different forms of youth organizations developed to serve different needs. The largest of these, the YMCA, the YWCA, Boys Clubs and Campfire continue today – almost 100 years later! World War I saw youth involved in Junior Red Cross and Scouts and their purpose was to serve "our fighting men." They did so by knitting, assembling basic need kits, planting victory gardens, and raising money for war bonds. After the war, many of the organizations that promote citizenship were formed for youth. These include organizations that until this time, only served adults were the Rotary, Kiwanis, Civitan, and Optimist Clubs.

history of philanthropy

As the century drew to a close, the timeline tells us that youth were more involved than ever before. They became equal partners with adults in resolving some of the community issues and took their place 'at the table' of many organizations by serving on boards, committees of board, and advisory councils. They became valuable voices for a community that truly cares about serving the common good of the community.

Judith Erickson states, "youth organizations have changed a great deal over the years and must continue to evolve within the communities where they operate. They must recognize their own potential as educational environments as well as providers of recreational activity to fill leisure hours. Young people today have too many competing demands on their time to spend it in ways that are not meaningful to them."

The material for the adaptation of the article on organizing children's philanthropy is part of an ongoing research effort. The American Youth Organizations Project, seeks to understand the historical development and contemporary roles of youth groups in the United States. In addition to numerous journal articles, products of the project include The Directory of American Youth Organizations: A Guide to 500 Clubs, Groups, Troops, Teams, Societies, Lodges and More for young people, published biennially by Free Spirit Publishing.

organizational millennium timeline

where does your organization fall in the youth movement history?

