



## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Friends:

While deeply personal and individual, giving a charitable gift creates community. Charitable giving, no matter what the motivation creates connections. Those connections are obvious when you think of the monetary support provided to others. Dollars earned by a person here are transferred to a charity over there. Less obvious are the connections between donors, for example, those links between donors who share in their support of particular charitable causes. Dollars earned here, there, and there all end up here. So from the intensely personal and deeply internal motivations for charitable giving comes connections, community, and broad community benefit.

Community foundations are right in the middle of all of that. We help make those connections, even for anonymous donors or those who give for intensely personal reasons. In the end, it is the connections made that are the measure of our success.

As you can see from this Annual Report many millions of dollars worth of connections ran right through Coastal Community Foundation. Many hundreds of donors worked through us to connect to charitable causes they care about. More than a few came to us interested in getting connected but did not know how or where. For them the hurdle was not writing the check. Instead it was deciding who or what to fund.

Those who do not know us well might imagine that we are this reservoir of detailed information on charitable causes and we simply tell people the best place to put their money or their volunteer time. While we do know hundreds of nonprofits we don't tell donors or prospective donors where to give. Instead we listen. We provide a range of options. We listen some more. Nine times out of ten what we hear is a decision, a new connection made, another strand added to the fabric of the community. For the others, the ten of a hundred that are still undecided, we provide additional paths toward a decision, perhaps arranging a volunteer slot at a nonprofit, or a meeting with other donors, or a place in our competitive grantmaking program as a reviewer...this tailored approach is how we build a resilient community.

The reasoning behind this is simple. The connections that matter in building communities are the strong connections. It takes time and expertise to find the right connections. That's what community foundations do.

It is no small wonder that giving through community foundations is growing, even in turbulent economic times. Giving through Coastal Community Foundation was up 9% last year. Strong connections hold fast.

I invite you to join with us in building stronger connections, stronger communities, and greater benefit to the entire Lowcountry.

Sincerely,

George Stevens