

The Exchange

Compiled by Ashley May

AS A NEW SCHOOL YEAR opened with pandemic still in the air, families across the country grappled with questions of how their children would be educated. A nationwide poll of K-12 parents conducted during the summer by State Policy Network found that more than half of all families were considering changing the course of schooling for their kids.

Necessity is truly the mother of invention. Many families have joined together to build parent-support networks, pooled resources to hire tutors for small groups of local children, created homeschool pods, or innovated in other ways. A grassroots phenomenon of “microschooling,” which was already gaining steam before the coronavirus, is now spreading like wildfire.

The National Parents Union, a network of 200 parent-serving advocacy organizations across all 50 states, has launched a program to help families with limited financial resources participate in microschooling. In grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$25,000, alliances of parents, families, or parent-led organizations were awarded

\$200,000, with a special focus on low-income households and communities of color.

NPU founder Keri Rodrigues observes with irony that once, “Parents were told they were too stupid to pick a school for their kids, and that they shouldn’t have choices or options. Flash forward a year, now the choices are all ours.”

The funding for this search for fresh educational options was provided by the VELA Education Fund, a partnership between the Walton Family Foundation and Charles Koch Institute. An initial \$1 million was distributed through NPU and three other organizations to seed grassroots experiments aimed at bringing effective education to children through unconventional channels.

—Victoria Watson

BACK IN MARCH, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Mastercard, and Wellcome created a Therapeutics Accelerator to speed up treatment options for those who contract covid-19. The accelerator quickly gathered \$250 million in contributions, including help from the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, the Michael and Susan Dell

98 out of 117

permanent private-school closures during the covid-19 pandemic are Catholic schools.

Get the up-to-date tally from Cato at cato.org/covid-19-permanent-private-closures

Foundation, and others, with Gates putting up \$125 million.

If you are wondering how the work is going, and what treatments are in motion, you can follow the donated money at therapeuticsaccelerator.org. Almost \$40 million of the first \$66 million of gifted funds went to speedy clinical trials. Hydroxychloroquine, azithromycin, Losartan, Kaletra, Colchicine, and other drugs were tested, as prophylactics or as cures. Some of the drug trials will have interim results available this fall.

The accelerator also plans to spend funds on new drug discovery, manufacturing, diagnostics, and data platforms. It will eventually invest in delivering treatments to people in the U.S. and abroad. Private givers have created an “end to end” approach to hasten possible treatments—from idea to bloodstream.

A DONOR GROUP led by the Rockefeller Foundation is filling a vacuum in covid-19 testing and contract tracing. Concerned that reopening the economy while protecting the vulnerable requires fast, easy, cheap, and readily available testing, Rockefeller launched

a major effort to enable 30 million tests weekly in the U.S. (up from about 5 million per week right now).

The longtime disease-fighting funder first used its expertise in medical problem-solving to put 150 experts in infectious disease and administration to work on a Covid-19 National Testing & Tracing Action Plan—which you can read at rockefellerfoundation.org. Then the philanthropy approached the National Governors Association and established a compact with seven states (so far) to jointly purchase new antigen tests that are less expensive than the genetic tests which now prevail, while also providing instant results instead of verdicts after a week of waiting. This gave manufacturers a market signal that if they increase production of these new kits, there will be buyers.

Rockefeller simultaneously attacked supply-chain problems that could slow manufacturing of the kits. It produced guidelines for testing procedures, model procurement contracts that states can copy, and advice on the best ways to store and distribute tests. In partnership with other funders,

ON CAMPUS

...accepting only...

“For the 2020-2021 graduate admissions cycle, the University of Chicago English Department is accepting only applicants interested in working in and with Black Studies.”

—“Faculty Statement (July 2020)” *English.UChicago.edu*

it also launched experiments to improve and speed contact tracing, so people in contact with those who have tested positive can be alerted. In addition to coordinating this large public project, Rockefeller has committed \$100 million of its own funds so far toward covid-19, with plans for more.

EVEN WITH A PANDEMIC

sweeping the U.S., gifts that help life go on continue to flow. The opening of the brand-new Alexandra Cohen Hospital for Women and Newborns was an August blessing for New York City. The facility triples the space that New York-Presbyterian Hospital offers for those beginning life's journey, and includes an unsurpassed newborn intensive care unit. The \$75 million founding gift from Alexandra Cohen simultaneously created a pediatric emergency department in the Washington Heights neighborhood. Over the last two decades Steve and Alex Cohen have given away \$625 million to improve child health and education, research Lyme disease, upend the status quo in mental-health treatment for veterans, and more.

In this strenuous time for the U.S. health system, other donors are offering support in a variety of creative ways. One anonymous giver in Santa Cruz, California, put

Twins were the first babies born at the new Alexandra Cohen Hospital!



up \$1 million so that every employee at his local hospital could receive a bonus. Small donations from video-game players accumulated into \$26.3 million during a fundraising effort for sick children. The funds will support the superb St. Jude Children's Research Hospital that treats youngsters from all over the country.

FATHER GREG BOYLE of Homeboy Industries received an unexpected call this summer from the Conrad Hilton Foundation. Homeboy—the leading gang rehabilitation charity in the world—was awarded the largest annual humanitarian prize in philanthropy. Hilton will give Homeboy \$2.5 million in unrestricted funding. Homeboy plans to use the money to construct transitional housing, expand its venture and jobs fund, and more. Father Boyle founded Homeboy in 1988 when he served as priest at Dolores Mission Church in East Los Angeles. Forged in a furnace of poverty and violence, Homeboy grew into a thriving example of human redemption and reconciliation. Congratulations, Homies!

IN THE TRAILER for the recent Netflix series about Madam C. J. Walker, the entrepreneur known as the first female self-made millionaire, Walker is portrayed as a

Q&A on race, policing, crime

Tony Mayer came to The Philanthropy Roundtable in 2019, as director of economic opportunity programs, to bolster philanthropic interventions that allow citizens to become self-sufficient and thriving. Earlier he worked at two nonprofits in Texas that prepare workers for meaningful employment—WorkFaith Connection and Prison Entrepreneurship Program. Philanthropy spoke with our in-house expert about programs catching his eye this summer.

Q: What groups are making progress today on racial justice?

A: The Heal America Tour has produced constructive dialogue in Minneapolis, Dallas, and Atlanta. In partnership with Stand Together, it creates city events linking local business and community leaders with victims of police violence and gang activity, so they can talk about positive solutions. The tour was initiated by Bishop Omar Jahwar of Urban Specialists, a Dallas-based nonprofit focused on improving neighborhood safety by empowering citizens to defuse gang confrontations, rehabilitate young people, and otherwise reduce violence.

Q: What about policing issues?

A: One of the speakers on the Heal America Tour is Ryan Tillman, who is a police officer in the Los Angeles area. Growing up, he remembers being stopped by police officers in uncomfortable ways. He has launched a group called Breaking Barriers

United to repair the bond between law enforcement and neighborhood residents by promoting transparency and building relationships. So far it has worked in 10 school districts with 25,000 students, and offered 175 workshops.

The William E. Simon Foundation supports a charity in Jersey City called Blacks in Law Enforcement Servicing the Community. It uses retired officers as volunteers who educate the city on interactions between police and civilians.

Another effort started by a former police officer is Code 3 for Change in Washington, D.C. Like other initiatives, it aims to bring together officers and local residents to talk in informal settings. Code 3 has been supported by the Diana Davis Spencer Foundation and Marriott, and is starting a pilot project focused on crime reduction block by block.

Q: Crime is once again becoming a problem in many cities. What can nonprofits do?

A: One group that's on my radar is ACT for Justice, which has been working in Dallas to connect residents of crime-stressed neighborhoods to free legal counsel who can advocate for safety. For example, one drug house can destabilize an entire area, drag down home values, and create danger. ACT helps neighbors use the law to shut these properties down.

go-getter with plenty of hustle. What *Self-Made: Inspired by the Life of Madam C. J. Walker* doesn't tell you about the beauty tycoon, though, is that she was not only an ambitious businesswoman but also a

lifelong philanthropist. The opportunities she provided for fellow black women and others were no afterthought.

This omission from Walker's legacy is what Tyrone Freeman seeks to rectify in

Madam C. J. Walker's Gospel of Giving: Black Women's Philanthropy During Jim Crow, a new book that frames its subject's life and legacy through her charitable gifts. Freeman, an assistant professor at Indiana University, argues that Walker's philanthropy was one of her main achievements, and that through her diversity of gifts—from monetary donations to gift baskets of food to organizing public events—she became a quintessential American philanthropist.

Throughout her life, Walker felt a particular calling to meet the needs of orphans, women, and the poor—people she related to on a personal level. Walker was the first free-born child of two former slaves. Her parents died when she was young, and Walker married at age 14 to escape her abusive brother-in-law. When her husband died several years later, she was left as a single mother, washing clothes to make ends meet.

Eventually she launched a hair-care business. When it flourished, she donated to the St. Louis Colored Orphan's Home, St. Paul AME Church, and other charities that had touched her when she was struggling.

“Few citizens have more at stake in the inculcation of civic knowledge and preservation of American values than the men and women who have put their lives on the line in military service. The recovery of a civic role for veterans organizations is crucial both to the well-being of veterans and to the revival of American unity. Donors aiming to help veterans thrive should explore ways to engage them in civics activities, and donors focused on civic education should look to veterans as assets.” —Shaun Rieley at [RealClearPolitics.com](https://www.realclearpolitics.com)

Walker offered much more than charitable gifts to causes she cared about. Her company provided employment for thousands of black women who had few opportunities at the time. She employed black workers to build her New York City mansion, explaining, “By giving work to colored men they are thus able to employ others.” She explained that “I am in the business world not for myself alone, but to do all the good I can for the uplift of my race.”

In six chapters surveying Walker's philanthropy, *Madam C. J. Walker's Gospel of Giving* depicts a woman who quickly grew from recipient to donor, who recognized the social value in successful commercial enterprises, and who engaged in alternative forms of philanthropy even when she lacked financial means. Freeman's writing style grows academic and repetitive at times, but this book is a valuable read for anyone interested in the history of private giving. —*Madeline Fry Schultz*

FREE GIVERS

Here's an adaptation from a recent op-ed in the Chronicle of Philanthropy by The Philanthropy Roundtable's Joanne Florino. You can read the

full text at the Chronicle website under the headline “Don't Destroy Foundations' Ability to Respond to the World's Next Crisis.”

When it comes to making decisions about giving during this time of enormous need, responses from private foundations have been as varied as their missions and grantees. Some immediately approved significant increases in annual giving, while others declared they would stick with their regular distributions rather than dipping into their endowments.

Critics of philanthropy may see mixed responses like these as a problem. Private giving is uncoordinated, often contradictory, and funds projects all over the map, rather than focusing only on what some consider the central problems of American society. Others—myself among them—see this variety and pluralism as the defining advantage of private giving.

The vast range of causes and organizations funded by nongovernmental dollars, the riot of ways donors deliver their donations, and the many timetables on which gifts are expended produce the nimble, experimental, impassioned responses that make for a vibrant civil society. That's why determinations about how much foundations should give, beyond the 5 percent mandated by law, should be left to those who understand their missions, are obligated to honor them, and have the authority to change direction when conditions warrant.

Many foundations have chosen to increase payout rates in order to meet pressing new needs while maintaining their existing missions. They are stepping outside their typical giving areas to support covid-19

relief funds and food banks, participate in direct transfers of money to individuals, and assist small businesses. Others are paying what would have been multi-year grants in an up-front lump sum, or adding an extra year to existing grants without being asked. Foundations that are not increasing the share of assets they distribute have helped charities by streamlining paperwork, fast-tracking grant approvals, shifting to electronic transfers, redirecting project-specific grants to general operating support, and removing challenge or matching requirements.

There are many ways to respond to events of the moment. And, alas, there will be many future crises that philanthropists will want to help with. Demands that donors make their gifts in stipulated ways, places, and rates will only stifle the inventive pluralism that gives philanthropy its remarkable ability to improvise quick responses to sudden challenges.

THE ANNUAL MEETING OF

The Philanthropy Roundtable was virtual this fall. Three half-day sessions were offered on line October 14-16. Topics included a debate between scholars on 1619 vs. 1776 as the birth date of American society and sessions on defending donor privacy, reopening schools during covid-19, protecting free speech on campus, and more. For more details on the Roundtable's 2020 annual meeting, visit [PhilanthropyRoundtable.org/annual](https://www.philanthropyroundtable.org/annual)

HETERODOX ACADEMY

was started in 2015 by three scholars who thought colleges

Honor Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Respect Donor Intent

I have spent a good deal of time over the past two years writing about donor intent—the good, the bad, the ugly, and occasionally the very ugly. But last week’s suggestion from a member of the House of Representatives to rename the Antonin Scalia School of Law at George Mason University adds a new twist to donor intent lore, bringing us into the realm of the just plain silly.

On September 30, TaxProf Blog mentioned that Congressman Gerald E. “Gerry” Connolly (D-VA) had issued a statement asking the GMU administration to rename the school the Scalia-Ginsburg School of Law. This change, Rep. Connolly noted, “honors the bequest (sic) but adds the balance in jurisprudence the current name lacks.” What he completely ignores, of course, are the wishes of the donors who—following Justice Scalia’s death in 2016—collectively donated \$30 million toward new law school scholarships and requested that the school be named for the late justice.

The wishes of those donors reflected their respect for Justice Scalia, of course, but they also honored the personal relationship he had developed

with the law school at GMU. He spoke at the dedication ceremony after the law school was built in 1999 and served as a guest lecturer in the following years. The late Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg herself understood that the school being named for her dear friend was felicitous. “It is a tribute altogether fitting that George Mason University’s law school will bear his name,” she said. “May the funds for scholarships, faculty growth, and curricular development aid the Antonin Scalia School of Law to achieve the excellence characteristic of Justice Scalia, grand master in life and law.”

Rep. Connolly’s worthy desire to honor Justice Ginsburg would be more appropriately satisfied by rallying his political donors to come up with \$30 million and then approaching the three as-yet-unnamed law schools in the District of Columbia (Georgetown, George Washington, and Howard) or—even better, the unnamed law schools of the three universities Justice Ginsburg attended (Cornell, Harvard, and Columbia). He may, however, first want to read The Philanthropy Roundtable’s new guidebook on donor intent.
—Joanne Florino

would benefit from more ideological diversity. Turns out they weren’t alone—five years later, HxA has surpassed the 4,000-member mark. Anyone involved in campus culture (except students) can become a member. The sole requirement is agreement with the statement “I support open inquiry, viewpoint diversity, and constructive disagreement in research and education.”

Recently the group opened membership to K-12 educators, hoping students can be acclimated to the value of open debate before they ever set foot on a college campus.

The nonprofit has recently launched small groups—Hx Communities—that meet in person (before covid) or on line to discuss issues. Members can even apply for funding from HxA to host a small coffee

hour on campus, or create a new course curriculum, or otherwise support more open inquiry in higher ed. The group does all this on a modest budget of \$2.3 million provided by donors from across the ideological spectrum, including the Ford Foundation, John Templeton Foundation, Snider Foundation, William E. Simon Foundation, Asness Family Foundation, and others.

IN ADDITION TO destroying images of dead Confederates, protestors this summer toppled a bust of George Washington in D.C., tore down sculptures of Washington and Thomas Jefferson in Portland, and tried to knock over the statue of President Andrew Jackson that sits across the street from the White House. In Boston, Richmond, St. Paul, and other cities they beheaded or otherwise ruined figures of Christopher Columbus. An equestrian image of Theodore Roosevelt was targeted at the American Museum of Natural History in New York.

Even heroic campaigners for racial justice like abolitionist Matthias Baldwin, antislavery leader John Greenleaf Whittier, abolitionist Hans Heg, and Confederacy-scourge Ulysses Grant had their memorials wrecked by rioters in Philadelphia, California, the Wisconsin capitol, and San Francisco, respectively—apparently just because the subjects were dead white males. That, however, can’t explain why Frederick Douglass’s statue was torn down in Rochester, or why “decolonizing” activists defaced the large bronze of Mahatma Gandhi in Washington, D.C. Black Lives Matter marchers in London covered with

graffiti a monument to the President who was assassinated for freeing enslaved blacks, Abraham Lincoln. Numerous other courthouse busts, public murals, and works of historical art have likewise been covered with paint, broken, removed, or vandalized.

These acts of erasure by enraged protestors are reminiscent of two other rampages within current memory: The Taliban’s 2001 obliteration of the two Bamiyan Buddhas (the largest sculptures of their type in the world). And the Red Guard attacks on numerous artifacts of history and culture during China’s Cultural Revolution (documented in an autobiographical entry immediately following this essay).

In all of these cases, zealots acted to delete images, history, and ideas they deemed intolerable. And each desecration left behind an ugliness that was far more than just visual.

One dispiriting aspect of this artistic cleansing is the refusal of the outraged to show any respect for historical context. There are demands in several U.S. cities now for removal of statues of Lincoln freeing slaves, on the grounds that this is an offensive image for fragile contemporary eyes. It was black Americans, however, who initiated and paid for many of these depictions—as well as other images mixing initiators and beneficiaries of racial liberation.

One of my favorite examples is the bronze figure of fanatical slavery-opponent John Brown befriending a black child, pictured on the next page. It was Brown’s attack on the federal arsenal at Harper’s



Ferry that sparked the military action of the Civil War. In his honor, African Americans from all over the country donated funds in hundreds of small sums so this handsome statue could be erected outside his home and burying place in the Adirondack Mountains of upstate New York. A son of former slaves, J. Max Barber, delivered an eloquent address at the 1935 unveiling of the figure, comparing Brown to John the Baptist for blazing a path to human emancipation. To conclude the dedication the mixed-race crowd sang “America.”

Will icon breakers offended by this depiction of a white man towering over a person of color next put a rope around Brown’s neck, tie it to a bumper, and make him disappear? Did anyone imagine Washington and Grant would be dragged to the ground? “You cannot credibly declare that some revolution in social affairs has a natural stopping point unless you personally commit to stopping it when it goes too far,” commented writer Megan McArdle recently. “If you don’t, you will cede issue after issue to the radicals.” —*Karl Zinsmeister*

SMASHING CULTURE AND HISTORY—1966 VERSION

Excerpted from Nien Cheng’s documentary memoir, Life and Death in Shanghai:

As the tempo of the proletarian cultural revolution gathered momentum... I was sitting alone in my study reading.... Suddenly the doorbell began to ring incessantly. At the same time, there was furious pounding of many fists on my front gate, accompanied by the confused sound of hysterical voices shouting slogans.... Thirty or 40 [students and teachers] all wore the arm band of the Red Guard....

A girl came within a few inches of where I stood and said, “What trick are you trying to play? Your only way out is to bow your head in submission....” A young man used a stick to smash the mirror hanging over the blackwood chest facing the front door.... Then he took from another Red Guard a small blackboard which he hung up on the hook. On it was written a quotation from Mao Zedong. It said, “When the enemies with guns are

annihilated, the enemies without guns still remain....” Then one of them shouted to me, “An enemy without gun! That’s what you are. Hand over the keys!” ...All the Red Guards disbursed into various parts of the house....

I was astonished to see several Red Guards taking pieces of my porcelain collection out of their padded boxes. One young man had arranged the set of four Kangxi winecups in a row on the floor and was stepping on them. I was just in time to hear the crunch of delicate porcelain under the sole of his shoe. The sound pierced my heart.... Holding my hand out I said, “This wine cup is nearly 300 years old.... No one in this world can make another like this one again. This is part of our cultural heritage. Every Chinese should be proud of it.”

The young man whose revolutionary work of destruction I had interrupted said angrily, “You shut up! These things belong to the old culture. They are the useless toys of the feudal emperors and modern capitalist class and have no significance to us.... The old culture must be destroyed to make way for the new socialist culture....”

I saw another young man coming down the stairs from the third-floor.... He declared, “This is a figure of Buddhist superstition. I’m going to throw it in the trash....” It was the work of the famous seventeenth century Ming sculptor Chen Wei.... The beauty of the creamy white figure was beyond description.

“...No, no, please! You mustn’t do that, I beg you.” I was so agitated that my voice was shrill.... “Take

these things to the Shanghai museum....” A girl said, “The Shanghai museum is closed. The experts there are being investigated. Some of them are also class enemies....”

In my bedroom next door, the Red Guards...were breaking my records. I stood up and said to the teacher, “These records are classical music by the great masters of Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.... Why not preserve the records and donate them to the Music Society?”

“You live in the past,” he said. “Don’t you know that our great leader has said that Western music of any kind is decadent?... As for the Music Society, it’s disbanded....”

A male Red Guard who had been there the night before but had gone away in the morning returned to the house. He came up the stairs two steps at a time and said to the girl helping me, “Incredible! It’s incredible! You know what I found when I went home? They are looting my house! How can they do this? My father and grandfather are both workers....”

“It’s my aunt.... She borrowed money to open a fruit stall after the war.... Now they say she is a capitalist because she had a private business of her own. Our home is being looted because she is now living with us....”

In the largest guest room, where the Red Guards had carried out most of their destructive labor of cutting and smashing, a radio set was tuned to a local station broadcasting revolutionary songs based on Mao’s quotations. A female voice was singing, “Marxism can be summed up in one sentence: Revolution is justifiable.”