

Door Opener Award

David Elderkin, Technology Advocate

Connecting people who care with causes that matter



Luckily for the Community Foundation, several years before COVID struck, Dave Elderkin struck. Retired IT professional Dave has always been a cheerleader for Community Foundation technology enhancements. Over the years, especially while he was a Board member from 2012 to 2017, with Dave's urging and support, various hardware, software, reporting systems, and IT consulting/training have been upgraded.

In 2019, growing weary of vague answers about the Community Foundation's website impact, Dave kickstarted an initiative at the Community Foundation to better understand and utilize website analytics. Always a proponent for best practice research, Dave introduced the Community Foundation Marketing & Communication staff to the Philadelphia Museum of Art IT staff, where Dave serves as a Board IT Committee member. Learning from their model of excellence, Dave then designed a template for the Community Foundation team to track key website analytics using Google Data Studio. Furthermore, he made sure the template was applied, analyzed on a regular basis, and that organizational learnings accrued.

Since the 2020 onset of the pandemic, the Community Foundation's website hits have expanded in the thousands and continue to grow each month. We can see which content is getting the most hits and focus on pages that get the most eyeballs. We can also track how users find our website, whether they visit from google or social media or MailChimp. This is critical to understanding who is visiting the Community Foundation online and what they came to find.

Chair Mike DeHaven CPA explains, "Our Door Opener award typically spotlights stellar professional advisors who bring legacy philanthropy to the attention of their clients and colleagues. During this COVID year, we found another crucial philanthropy connector: technology. A longtime friend, fund advisor, and past Board member of the Community Foundation, Dave has constantly prodded us to get more techno-savvy. And this year, all the doors he has opened to technology paid off big-time."

Dave's service is not limited to the Community Foundation. He has volunteered with Habitat for Humanity and taught IT Networking and Project Management at Penn State Brandywine. Dave has served on the Board and/or also voluntarily developed IT software solutions for Art-Reach, CultureWorks Greater Philadelphia, Fleisher Art Memorial, Kennett Symphony, and Settlement Music School. And for over a decade, he has volunteered as a tutor at the KIPP DuBois Collegiate Academy, a public charter school in West Philadelphia—some of the most enlightening, eye-opening experiences that Dave has ever witnessed.

Dave is clear and succinct: "Nonprofits play a vital role in building healthy communities. I am pleased that my IT background helps the Community Foundation expand its reach. In this year of physical distance, our connections continue to matter."

