

PVF Film Captures Essence of What We Do

“Find People You Trust and Fund Them.” This is PVF’s motto. PVF is consistently in the community seeking outstanding professionals working in the non-profit arena. When we discover people who are committed and passionate in their charitable work, we make an effort to forge a relationship and support their work.

Recently, a short film was created featuring PVF and three charitable organizations led by outstanding individuals with whom PVF works. The film captures the passion of the workers and the impact of their services. The film portrays PVF’s role not only as a funder but also as an advocate encouraging each organization to maximize its potential by continually striving for more. The relationship established between PVF and these groups is one of trust. With ongoing communications and visits, PVF stays very familiar with their services and impact and serves as a colleague, brainstorming over issues faced, and a resource for cultivating and supporting their excellent work.

If you are interested in viewing this short film, please contact PVF and request the video, “PVF: What We Do.”

PVF’s Foundation Consulting Program Expands to Performance Reviews

There is a lot written about foundations and accountability. Unlike industries whose quality of service is market driven and tied to customer satisfaction, there are few checks and balances

on foundations. PVF has been providing consulting services to community foundations all over the United States for the past 10 years, specifically in the areas of operations and grantmaking. In an effort to raise the bar, PVF has recently added Performance Reviews to the list of services it provides. Performance Reviews are analogous to university or hospital accreditations, and consist of a four-day intensive session during which all foundation staff are interviewed, internal systems are assessed, fiscal health is measured, grantmaking and development is scrutinized and suggestions for improvement are made. The visit is followed by a lengthy Report on findings, areas for improvement, suggestions and conclusions. The concept of the Performance Review was developed by PVF and is the first of its kind in the foundation field in its comprehensiveness and as an internal measure of excellence.

Somerton Educational Grants Program

UC Berkeley Engineering Professor Wilbur Somerton and his wife, Irma Somerton, did much during their lifetimes to provide opportunities to young people through education, including the creation of the MESA Program (Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement) at UC Berkeley. MESA was designed to prepare educationally disadvantaged K-12 students from diverse backgrounds with support systems to encourage interest and foster talent in math, engineering and science and, to prepare students to obtain college degrees in engineering and science.

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In memory of Professor and Mrs. Somerton, the Somerton children (now adults) have created the Somerton Educational Grants Program at PVF. Funded by the Somerton children, as well as, through *in memoriam* gifts, the Program captures the giving interests of the Somertons and their dedication to the advancement of youth through higher education. Through the Program, grants are available to support students with expenses for critical necessities that typically do not fall within student aid programs. Grants are available to MESA students enrolled at UC Berkeley and to School of Library and Information Science students enrolled at San Jose State University.

In her letter of thanks, one recent Somerton grant recipient wrote:

The journey of achieving a college degree has been a challenge. Although I am so close to accomplishing my goal, sometimes the adversities make this journey seem eternal. I am the first one in my family to have ever graduated from high school, and now the first one to be graduating from college. Thanks to the generosity and good heart of Prof. Somerton and his wife Irma, my dreams will soon become true. God bless you for your support. I hope to always make you proud.

Through the Somerton Educational Grants Program the spirit and vigor of the good work of Prof. and Mrs. Somerton are ongoing. The donors provide the concept, PVF creates the program.