

Fuse the Light

Empowering Ethical Fundraising and Strengthening Communities through AFP

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY TIME AND PLACE PHOTOGRAPHY

When it comes to philanthropy, passion is the spark—but sustainable impact needs fuel. This fuel is funding, powered by effective fundraising, rooted in ethical practices, and supported by a nurturing community. The Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP) shines as a beacon in this space. Since 1960, when it was founded as the National Society of Fundraisers, AFP has paved the way for those dedicated to ethical giving. With over 26,000 members across 240 chapters worldwide, AFP continues to kindle meaningful change by empowering fundraisers to lead with integrity and amplify philanthropy's enduring light.

A LEGACY OF ETHICAL GIVING

The AFP Greater Austin Chapter, founded in 1984, has long championed this mission. It supports local fundraisers by providing education, mentorship, and resources to help organizations raise funds both ethically and effectively. AFP Greater Austin is more than a professional network; it's a community where fundraisers learn, grow, and advance their

careers. Through career navigation education, a live job board, peer support, certification support, and professional development programs, AFP ensures that skilled and principled professionals will always lead the nonprofit sector.

THE POWER OF PHILANTHROPY DAY

For 36 years, AFP Greater Austin has hosted an awards ceremony honoring remarkable individuals, corporations, foundations, and nonprofits whose philanthropic contributions have left a lasting impact in Central Texas. This year's Philanthropy Day in May focused on "Sharing the Light: Illuminating Impact." This event aims to "acknowledge the incredible impact that philanthropy has in Greater Austin, celebrate the philanthropists who choose to invest here, and to recognize the fundraisers who are transforming philanthropy into impact to better our community," according to Executive Director Jayden Beatty. At this extraordinary annual event, fundraisers, donors, and nonprofit leaders come together to celebrate the power of philanthropy and honor those making a significant difference.

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The awards are nominated by the public and carefully evaluated by a panel of nonprofit professionals, highlighting the individuals and organizations that turn generosity into tangible change.

Heather Henry, AFP Greater Austin's 2025 Board President and VP of Development at the National Domestic Violence Hotline, captured their goals during her 2025 Philanthropy Day speech:

"Because of AFP, I'm not just a better fundraiser—I'm a better leader. And that matters. It matters because what I've learned through AFP means The Hotline can answer more calls, chats, and texts from victims and survivors in crisis.

It means that Amelia Long and Melinda Gonzales Boe at the Central Texas Food Bank can stretch every dollar further and serve more meals to our hungry neighbors after vital federal funding is cut.

It means that Holly Wissman at Breakthrough Central Texas can support more young people to be the first in their family to graduate from college.

Supporting AFP doesn't just support one organization—it supports all of us. It ensures that every nonprofit in our community has the tools, the talent, and the tenacity to meet the moment and do the most good. When you invest in AFP, www.tuneintexasmagazine.com

you invest in the people behind the mission—people who make hope happen every single day."

VOLUNTEERS & SPONSORS: THE BACKBONE OF AFP GREATER AUSTIN

AFP Greater Austin thrives thanks to its dedicated volunteers and generous sponsors. These volunteers lead educational programs, facilitate scholarship opportunities, and provide mentorship that strengthens the next generation of fundraising leaders.

Sponsors play a crucial role by ensuring that fundraisers have access to scholarships, workshops, and conferences that enhance their skills and keep them informed about ethical best practices. As Beatty notes, "Sponsors are vital partners in making our work possible. Their support helps fund over \$17,000 in scholarships annually, six educational luncheons, and our signature One Day Conference each fall—an immersive day of learning and growth for fundraisers. In addition, sponsors are the backbone of our annual Philanthropy Day celebration, which recognizes and uplifts a culture of giving in our community—a key ingredient for a vibrant and effective nonprofit sector."



COMMUNITARIAN OF THE YEAR
Fayruz Benyousef, CFRE
Nominated by The National Domestic Violence Hotline & AGE of Central Texas



OUTSTANDING PHILANTHROPIST OF THE YEAR
Ali Khataw
Nominated by Austin Ed Fund & Austin Chamber of Commerce



SPECIAL RECOGNITION (INDIVIDUAL)
Vicki Roberts & The Roberts Family
Nominated by Center for Child Protection



OUTSTANDING PHILANTHROPIC FOUNDATION/ORGANIZATION OF THE YEAR
The Junior League of Austin
Nominated by The Junior League of Austin



OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER FUNDRAISER OF THE YEAR
Melinda Garvey
Nominated by AW Media, Inc. & Austin Habitat for Humanity



SPECIAL RECOGNITION (CORPORATION)
Live Oak Ventures
Nominated by Austin Community Foundation



OUTSTANDING PHILANTHROPIC SMALL CORPORATION OF THE YEAR
Hot Dog Marketing
Nominated by Women Communicators of Austin, RRISD Partners in Education Foundation & Round Rock Chamber of Commerce



KELLY DAVIDSON MEMORIAL OUTSTANDING PHILANTHROPIC YOUTH OF THE YEAR
Lily Rerecich
Nominated by Ann Richards School for Young Women Leaders & Travis Audubon



OUTSTANDING FUNDRAISING PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR
Adrienne Longenecker, CFRE
Nominated by AFP Greater Austin Board

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

AFP Greater Austin's vision extends beyond current successes. Its long-term goals include championing ethical fundraising, promoting IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, Access) within the nonprofit sector, offering high-quality educational support through six annual chapter luncheons and a one-day conference, and increasing capacity within the nonprofit sector. AFP Greater Austin is committed to shaping a future where fundraisers thrive and philanthropy flourishes.

A key initiative is the chapter's BIPOC Opportunity Fund (Black, Indigenous, People of Color), which aims to support local BIPOC-led nonprofits by providing funding and expert guidance, thereby fostering a more inclusive and equitable sector. In 2025, AFP Greater Austin successfully achieved its goal of raising \$50,000 for the fund's inaugural year.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

For those inspired by the mission of AFP Greater Austin, there are several ways you can contribute:

- **Donate:** Make a one-time or monthly donation at www.afpaustin.org/donate-now
- **Volunteer or Join the Board:** If you're interested in helping shape ethical fundraising in Austin, please reach out to jayden@afpaustin.org for opportunities.

At its core, AFP is not merely an association—it is a guiding light in philanthropy, championing ethical fundraising and empowering change-makers to illuminate impact wherever they serve. By promoting education, advocating for integrity, and nurturing a culture of shared generosity, AFP equips fundraisers to uphold the highest standards and become beacons of transformation in their communities.

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