

As the Sillerman fellow in the Office of Development and Donor Services at the Boston Foundation, I helped to research and analyze donor co-investment strategies as well as staffed two field of interest funds in their grantmaking and fundraising processes.

When I first began, I took a considerable amount of time to meet with staff in both Program and Donor Services to understand their roles and how they interact. My goals for the informational interviews were to explore ideas on how their positions or responsibilities could improve if given support from the opposite department.

I then took a database of all the grants from the past three fiscal years and extracted the grants, from the general fund, to organizations the Foundation has identified as strategic and the donors that give to them. I did the same data analysis for charter schools and Vision Fund grantees. The overlapping of general fund grantmaking and donor-advised grantmaking shows opportunities for co-investments and communication between program and development staff. This document will serve as guidance in potential collaborative grantmaking.

My other contribution to the improvement of donor communication was the drafting of a donor survey to better promote foundation knowledge and services. My goal of having a more systematic process of communicating with donors is to keep them engaged soon after creating a fund and to understand at what level and how relationship managers should be interacting with donors.

While compiling and analyzing the data from the master grants document, I also assisted in facilitating the first year of grantmaking for the Latino Legacy Fund. My responsibilities included drafting a request for proposal, conducting research around the desired grant area of early childhood education and collecting the submitted proposals for review.

I was also afforded the opportunity to draft several pieces of fundraising material for the Latino Legacy Fund:

- An appeal letter to current donors
- A letter of interest to a potential corporate funder
- A grant proposal to a foundation

My last significant project was completing the initial clean-up phase of the shared drive. I reviewed all of the parent folders and files within to determine whether documents could be archived, discarded or kept for future use as well as assigning staff members to the tasks appropriate for their roles. The clean-up of the shared drive will help the development and donor services team have a more useful and efficient document management system for current and new staff.

The majority of my responsibilities at the Boston Foundation were focused on strategic use of data to improve effectiveness of donor and program grantmaking as well as illustrate how data management could be better. The exposure I had to data analysis and field of interest fundraising has been invaluable. I have truly enhanced my knowledge of donor communication and strategic fundraising.