



How to Make Sure Your Estate Leaves a Legacy with Our Fund's Help



David Jobin, president and CEO of the Our Fund Foundation, speaking at the 2020 South Florida Philanthropy Awards, which honors their most generous philanthropists of the year. Photo via Our Fund Foundation, Facebook.

For charities big and small, every dollar counts. And recently, the Our Fund Foundation received three legacy gifts totaling almost \$10 million.

The donors – Kay Maunsbach, Frederick Emery and James Laird – were three long-time supporters of the South Florida LGBTQ+ community foundation who wrote the nonprofit into their will, continuing their support even after their death.

“For people who have supported LGBT causes through their lifetime, to be able to do that when they’re no longer here and have a vehicle like Our Fund ... I think it has to be really comforting for people to know that what they’re leaving behind is in such good hands,” said David Jobin, the president and CEO of the Our Fund Foundation.

Nicknamed the Stonewall Generation, by 2030 there will be about 7 million LGBT people older than 50, according to SAGE (Services & Advocacy for GLBT Elders). With many LGBT people not having heirs, leaving their assets to an organization or charity that is important to them is a great option. But for Miami attorney Liz Schwartz, clients don’t ask about estate giving often enough.

“Sometimes I see people straining to come up with the names of their distant family members to leave their assets to, and it’s so wonderful when they think about the meaningful nonprofit organizations and causes whose work they want to endow for the future,” she said in an email.

If one does not have a will, it is up to the state to distribute the funds. Within the LGBT community, where many do not have beneficiaries or might be estranged from family members, their assets could go to places they wouldn’t approve of.

“It’s important to have a will so the money goes to where you want it to,” said Jeffrey Selzer, a Fort Lauderdale attorney.

To draft a will or a trust, one will sit with their attorney to determine who and what will receive money upon their death. The charity can be the beneficiary of a specific amount or an account, like the balance of a retirement or investment account. The donor can also be as specific as they want by writing a letter of intent, requesting that the money go to a specific program or even create a new scholarship.

For example, Selzer said he has a client whom he helped draft a trust and letter of intent for her money to be used for a college scholarship for lesbian veterans. Together, they wrote up a mission statement and details on how she wanted the scholarship to be handled. When she dies, it can be distributed to universities for students to apply.

For those concerned about privacy, Selzer noted that trusts are considered private documents, even ones filed through the courts. People can also request in their letter of intent to make the donation anonymous.

"Think about the impact you can make on the organizations which have made an impact on your life and those you love," Schwartz said. "The current administration has gutted protections for the most vulnerable among us and the current occupant of the White House has now appointed 200 judges, and they serve for life. Supporting the next generation of our advocates and activists will be essential to continue fighting for full, lived equality."

But remember, for charities, every dollar counts. Anyone can write a charity into the will or trust, not just the wealthy.

Jobin said, "The fact is whether it's the sale of your condo or your company, you're going to leave something behind, and how thoughtful do you want to be about that?"

[charity](#) [Our Fund](#) [LGBT Community](#)