

[00:00:30] Patrick: Hello everyone. Welcome. Welcome to the leadership window. This is Doctor Patrick Jinks. Welcome to episode 125. Man, we just keep hitting those quarter century marks now. And I gotta tell you, this show has just been so much fun to do. And it's getting more fun recently because I've started going on the road a little bit with it, with my little portable podcasting equipment. And we're on the road again this week. We're in Pauly's Island, South Carolina, gem of a place. I know a number of people who call Pauly's island home and also who like to come here and visit. It's on the coast of South Carolina between Myrtle beach and Charleston. And you know, you got to look it up. It's a really cool place. Georgetown. Georgetown county. This is the area that we're in. And I'm sitting with two extraordinary leaders at the Francis P. Bunnelle foundation here in Pauly's island serving Georgetown county. And if you've been a regular listener to this show or you're in the nonprofit sector, you know what foundations are all about. And this is a really unique foundation, I think, at least in the arena that I've been around. And we're going to talk a little bit about its setup and its structure and what it set out to do. I thought this would be valuable for our listeners because most of our listeners are leading in nonprofit organizations. So you're writing grants, you're looking for foundations to help fund your work, but you're also in the trenches serving people, accomplishing social sector missions. And some of you are in foundations of different types, community foundations, family foundations, even corporate foundations. Foundations. We're going to talk about how this one is unique and what it takes, what the mind, the leadership mindset is in leading a foundation like this. And I've got a few questions, a little bit of my own perspective. I'll probably throw in the mix here. But let me get straight to our guest.

Geales Sands is the executive director of the foundation here for Geales. First of all, welcome to the show and tell. Just go ahead and tell us how long now have you been the director here?

[00:03:00] Geales: I was the first employee and I've been here for 20 years.

[00:03:03] Patrick: Okay. And the foundation's, I think, 25 years old, correct. Now we're almost 25 years old. And so we have, Jill's with us, and then we have Ashley Nelson. And Ashley is. She said a little while ago, offline, that she's one of the rarities here. She's a Pauly's island native. But I'm going to actually let the two of you introduce yourselves a little bit more and just kind of how you came to this work. Give us a. Give us a little bit about yourself and as it relates to your journey right here and the role you play in the world. Geales, we'll start with you.

[00:03:35] Geales: Okay. My family moved here in 25 years ago. In 1999, my husband took a job with Brook Green Gardens. Hopefully a bunch of you have heard of Brook Green Gardens, which is the gem of this area. But we moved here and this foundation didn't exist when we first got here. But misses Bonnell set this foundation up in the year 2000, when she was 95 years old. And she set it up with the help of her two young attorneys. And she wanted to benefit Georgetown county. She was not from Georgetown. She had moved here from Greenville, but she lived here very happily. And she loved Georgetown county. And she wanted her gift to make a difference in the community that she loved so much. So the foundation was set up as a supporting organization to the coastal Community foundation of Charleston. And that means that we are a separate entity, but we are connected with them. They, according to Ir's rules, they appoint the majority of our board members. We have five board members and they appoint three of them.

We pay them a fee and they do all of the back office work for us. I have never written a check. They take care of all of that. They set up our health insurance. They set up our 403 bs and all that. And they support us in many, many ways that they are a great group down in Charleston and they are always there when we need them. So that has been a great thing to have their support.

We make grants to nonprofits in Georgetown county that make Georgetown County a better place. And they're the boots on the ground. We have one tool that they do all the hard work. So we support a large number. In the first few years I was here, we supported about 33 nonprofits. Last year the number was more like 87.

[00:05:41] Patrick: Yeah.

Fantastic. Ashley, I'm really honored and thrilled to be getting to do some work with you and seeing your senior leadership in this organization. Tell us a little bit more about yourself and your role here at the foundation.

[00:05:57] Ashley: Sure. So I'm Ashley Nelson. I am the senior director at the foundation. I started my journey here June of 2014. And as I shared with Patrick offline, I'm a rarity as I'm a Polly's island native. So I have the luxury of working less than five minutes from where I live.

But more importantly, I have the privilege of working in the community that I grew up in. So that adds a whole other layer of value to the work, because quite often the people that we serve, or sometimes even the leaders that we work with, are people that have known my family for generations. So seeing the impact of the work as it plays out with people that I've either been connected to or my family has had some level of connection to, what Jules didn't tell you is she often says, I'm related to everybody. And so often it might be a relative, but there's always some level of connection to me or my family or somebody that I know in the work. And that just makes me so proud to work at the foundation, but it makes me even more excited to do the work that we do for this community.

[00:07:13] Patrick: So I'm curious, on that note, does that ever make your work in any way more difficult that you're in this community? You have a bias towards certain things. You know, people you like. Does does it ever, I'm hearing you say it enhances your work, and it's part of the joy of your work, but does it ever, does it ever complicate your work to be so close to the community?

[00:07:39] Ashley: Yes and no.

It complicates it when I have to be a part of the decision to say no for whatever reason, or to fund something less than what they've asked for. But I really try hard, and, I mean, sometimes it comes into play where there are biases, but I really try hard to keep the relationship separate from the work. Somebody told me years ago to go with it, go at the work with the mission in mind. And when you lead with the mission and you take the people out of it, it kind of helps to make the tough decisions less tough in making them. And so when it does come down to biases, so to speak, I really try to look at the work and how it aligns with what our mission and our focus is, and that helps me in those tougher situations.

[00:08:33] Patrick: Geales the mission of the organization was pretty much established by Miss Benell herself. One of the things that we've done is I've worked with you, with your board and your staff, and some strategic planning, is you have the original letter from Miss Benell, that set up this foundation, her intentions and her instructions and her admonition of the board at that time and any board of the future. And you bring it out and you read it periodically. And I think we've read it probably six times in the last few, couple of meetings that we've held because it sort of. Our magnetic north. Right, or your magnetic north. Talk a little bit about what's in that letter. She wrote it when she was 95 years old. She had some help writing it, we would imagine, right, with her attorneys. But it is really, we won't read the whole thing on the air here, but it's a really powerful, fascinating, brilliant, in my view, piece of work. Talk about the letter and how the letter informs your mission and your work.

[00:09:44] Geales: Well, we feel so fortunate to have this two page letter from Misses Bonell telling us why she was setting up this organization and what she had in mind for it and how she really wanted to try to make a difference in Georgetown county, because she was one of those people who knew that to those whom much is given, much is expected. But she was also a person that didn't want any fanfare. I mean, she was a lady who bought an ambulance for the rescue squad. She bought a fire truck for the volunteer fire department.

But she didn't want her name on anything.

Our local animal center, she was a great lover of a stray dog. Lucky was the dog that wandered across her yard and got adopted. But she loved animals. And our St. Francis Animal center, which is the local animal center that she supported, pleaded with her to let them spell Francis with an e instead of with an l, like the saint. And she did allow them to do that. So the St. Francis animal center is spelled with an e, like a lady's name because it's named for Frances Bonnell, which is kind of a nice little small town thing.

[00:11:01] Patrick: It puts a little sainthood on Miss Bunnelle for her work. Yeah, that's pretty cool.

[00:11:05] Geales: Oh, yeah. And, you know, she was just so thoughtful and she was so forward thinking. She knew that things would change and she wanted to give us the levery to go with that change. She sort of gave us her blessing, knowing that things were not going to be the same as they were when she wrote that letter in the year 2000, and she died shortly thereafter. But she was of sound mind and she knew what she was doing. And Georgetown was at the top of her Christmas tree, so to speak.

[00:11:40] Patrick: Yeah. Ashley, you were talking about the letter some today. The word you used was future proof that she wrote that letter in a future proof kind of way. I guess my question for you would be, how do you navigate the balance between the prescriptive part of her letter, which, there's some prescriptions in there, there's, you know, a few. She named specifically a few agencies that were her top ones. They don't all exist today, but she had a little bit of framing of the kind of social things she wanted the organization to do. And yet she did also say, I know that things will change and future boards will need to be able to be flexible. And those. How do you, as a staff team, honor the integrity of her intentions while also evolving with changing landscapes, needs, and opportunities? How do you navigate that as a leader? What are the things you keep in mind?

[00:12:40] Ashley: Honestly, we do what we did in our strategic planning session.

We take a look at the letter. It sounds simple, but I've been at the foundation for ten years, and we read the letter at the beginning of. At the first board meeting of every year we read the letter. So at a minimum, I've heard the letter read out loud ten times, probably read it myself 20 more times. But every time you read the letter, you find something different in the letter that kind of screams out to you. And I think it goes, one of the words she used is current times and every current needs, and they're different every year. And that, that's one of the things that I think gives us the flexibility to honor her wish, but also address what we currently see happening in our community. We never anticipated that we would experience a pandemic, but in that year, it was a current need, it was the current times, and we had to address that accordingly. So Mrs. Bunnelle was very wise in her years in giving a descriptive summary of her desires, but also giving us the flexibility to make adjustments as necessary.

[00:14:05] Patrick: Well, I appreciated in that strategic planning and some of the conversations that we had. I appreciated the continued questions that came up. You know, it's like, pull the

letter up again.

Are we honoring this? Does this say we have to do this? Does this say we can't do this?

I did appreciate it. I really do see it as kind of a magnetic north for you. And we did some, you know, we've done some thinking about your mission and your mission statement, and I think we kind of landed right now, at least, on the place where her original letter kind of states the mission. It's really about enhancing the quality of life for Georgetown county. And she kind of articulated, she didn't put it this way, but she kind of articulated today and tomorrow, we want to meet the current needs. But there are also systemic inequities that exist in the area that she hoped the foundation would work to address. And I just thought that was beautiful.

Geales, you know, having been sort of the, maybe not the founding executive director, but certainly the first paid executive director of the organization. What have you seen change in 20 years? You know, what's different today about, you know, your perspective on the leadership of the foundation, the foundation itself, the community.

What's been the biggest change in 20 years in your work here?

[00:15:31] Geales: I think a lot of what has been accomplished is the strengthening of the nonprofits that are here doing the work. And we have a very strong nonprofit community. They're very collaborative. They work together.

And now where we used to have 33 organizations, I mentioned to you, we now support more like 87. Not all of them are located physically here, but some of them are outside of Georgetown county, but they are definitely doing work here.

And the best thing that shows the community building that goes on through our nonprofit community is Palmetto giving day, which we do the first Tuesday of May of every year. And this year we had, I think, 86 organizations participated. This was the 8th year.

[00:16:23] Patrick: Now is that when I was going to ask about this, because I don't remember from earlier conversations, the Palmetto giving day. And a lot of communities have those kinds of single, the 24 hours gives online. The nonprofits kind of do their own marketing for it because they're all vying for give to us. But it's a great, it's a, it's a bringing together of the community to be philanthropic. We talked to a lot of your stakeholders over the last several months. They love it. They're proud of it there.

But my logistic question is 86 organizations receive money through that day. Are those the same 86 that you give grants to? Are some of them the same, but some of them aren't correct, I would imagine. But we're talking about two different process. Was it when you say year giving grants right now instead of 30 now to 80 something organizations, you're not talking about the Palmetto giving day. That's just that one.

[00:17:20] Geales: That's just a coincidental number. Yeah, because there are lots of, as long as you're a non profit operating in Georgetown county, you can participate in Palmetto giving day. But they are not all our grantees by a long stretch. In fact, I'm talking about Palmetto giving day. And Ashley is actually the godmother of Palmetto giving day. So she knows all the ins and outs of Palmetto giving day. But I will tell you. In the first year we did it. I think we raised \$600,000.

[00:17:44] Ashley: \$676,000

[00:17:52] Patrick: And how many cents? That came off the time pretty quick.

[00:17:54] Ashley: But we had 32 organizations in year one, and this is now year eight. And we had 83 organizations and we raised \$4.1 million.

[00:18:05] Patrick: Wow.

[00:18:06] Geales: In 36 hours.

[00:18:07] Patrick: Oh, it's 30. It's a 36 hours.

[00:18:09] Ashley: So during COVID we decided because our nonprofits, many of them that had large fundraisers, had to cancel as a result of COVID And so we decided to extend our giving day from 24 hours to 36 hours.

We were hesitant because we thought we weren't going to see a shift, but we grew.

I think we raised an additional million dollars in that additional 12 hours, and we hadn't looked back since. Wow.

[00:18:38] Patrick: So now you just left it at 30?

[00:18:40] Ashley: No, we've left it at 36 hours.

[00:18:41] Patrick: 4 million today or 4 million the.

[00:18:44] Ashley: Year of COVID 4 million this year.

[00:18:46] Patrick: Wow. Wow.

[00:18:47] Geales: And then we have a big celebration party the day of Palmetto giving day. We've done it at the Kaminsky house the last couple of years. One year, the lieutenant governor came to our celebration party, so. But all the nonprofits, it's fun to watch how they all lift each other up.

They're friendly, competitive on Palmetto giving day, but they're given to each other and they're helping each other. And it's a one Georgetown sort of thing.

[00:19:18] Patrick: So there's a little bit of a dichotomy here. If I can open this a little bit.

You talked about it's a one Georgetown and the collaborative nature of the nonprofit sector.

On the other hand, part of your work, as Miss Bonnell put it in her letter, was about the systemic inequities that exist. And some of the stakeholders that we talk to also talk about a divided community in ways and maybe in multiple ways. So one of your big areas is around bringing community together. Can you talk about sort of where that came from and why? And maybe a little bit of the context of why that's important here in Georgetown county or Ashley, do you want to talk about that?

[00:20:02] Ashley: So, geographically, our county is divided by a bridge. Some look at the bridge as a connector, others see it as a point of division. And we are a small county. We have 63,000 people in Georgetown county. And so we understand at the foundation the importance of being collaborative and working together. We're better together. And so we essentially provide opportunities for our nonprofits to work together. We try to foster a spirit of collaboration amongst

the nonprofit community and so I would say Palmetto giving day, although it raises a whole lot of money, it brings people together. Whether you're from the nonprofit community, the business community, or just a resident in Georgetown County, Palmetto giving day helps to bring our community together beyond the money that's raised. And I think that's one of the beautiful things of that event.

We've even gone, as we are now, having community conversations. We started last year with a focus on DEI, but decided that we would continue the conversations and focus them more based on the work that we're doing. So we had our first conversation on connecting communities, and there were people who learned so much about other parts of the county that they didn't know about.

Our next conversation is going to be on affordable housing, which has been a buzzword but a huge topic in our community for years. And clearly people are interested. We've got over 100 people that have signed up for that conversation. So it's going to be interesting to see what comes out of it.

We believe that we are better together, so we understand that we have to bring people together to have conversations and to celebrate.

[00:21:56] Patrick: Yeah. Geales, I asked you what you've seen changed in 20 years.

During our staff sessions over the last couple of days, you have multiple times made it clear that the loudest voice in that room needed to be what you call the future of the organization, as you, you're not at the beginning of your career here, let's put it that way. And so you're, you're, you know, you, but, but you have a, you have an aspiration and a vision for the future. What do you hope? What do you hope is true about the work of the foundation in the next 20 years?

[00:22:37] Geales: You know, we've been to a lot of, we've been attending a lot of planning commission meetings and county council meetings where affordable housing has been a very hot topic.

And I have seen my neighbors acting in a way that is not community focused. It's sort of singularly focused on what's best for me. And that makes me very sad. And I would like to see the introduction of civility back into our community in those conversations.

So we're trying to figure out the Bunnelle Foundation's role in leading the charge in bringing civility back to all community conversations because we all live here together. And now, right now is the immediate aftermath of Hurricane Helene up in the mountains in the Asheville, Hendersonville area. And those people are all pulling together to help each other. They've never had experience with a hurricane before. And so people who have lived through hurricanes are up there trying to help them. And that's the spirit of community that I want to foster here, and I think we'll get there. And that's what's most important to me is to connect these communities of the people. The Gullah folks have an expression about been heres and come heres. And so Ashley has been here and im a come here and its important, I think, that the been heres and the come work together to build this community that we all love.

[00:24:30] Patrick: Ashley, a quick question for you, and we'll start to kind of wind down the conversation here a little bit because turns out you two leaders are extraordinarily busy. I thank you for carving out a little bit of time for us.

Foundations like this don't have any sort of, they're not, you're not beholden to a set of donors that want you to do certain things or don't want you to do certain things. That doesn't mean you

can just run any way that you want and do anything that you want in the community, but you've got a lot more autonomy and ability to make some of the decisions and things that maybe, for example, even a united way. It's my background might not be able to do because you've got donors that you've got to please every year and re raise your money. How do you balance that? Because one of the conversations that's happened in this strategic planning process has been around courage and boldness. You've got a stand up statement, standing up, I think you call it statement that you put together in the wake of the George Floyd incident and the events of 2020 and systemic racism and fighting against it and those kinds of things. What do you think is next for the foundation in terms of that kind of voice leadership, where you don't just turn off a whole community, but you also realize we've got some autonomy and we're going to take some leadership in that. How do you balance that and sort of what's next? What do you think the role of the foundation can be over the coming years?

[00:26:04] Ashley: Wow, Patrick, that's a very loaded yet tough question.

[00:26:11] Patrick: I make my living asking tough questions, so it's just part of the game.

[00:26:18] Ashley: Geales helped me out with that one. One of our internal mottos at the foundation is if we can't take a risk, then who can? And I think being able to take risks gives us the flexibility to be creative and to take a stance on matters that, whether it's governmental or other organizations in our community, are able to take those risks, but also, I think the partners in our community trust and respect the Bennell foundation so much that they are interested in the work being done and are looking to us to lead the way in doing the work. So I think for us, even in tough conversations. Cause I do believe that even in affordable housing, having that conversation and doing that work might not be what some folks in our community are looking to see happen.

But we've got it. We have to take a stance on it to see the work get done. And somebody is just looking for us to take one step forward.

And I don't think we're gonna have issues with others joining or coming on board to help partner in that work.

I think we always have to have our ear on what our community needs. Now, will we be able to meet all of those needs?

Probably not, but we've heard affordable housing over and over again. We didn't necessarily know what our role would be in affordable housing, but again, we decided, let's take a risk. Let's see what we can do. And we said we were going to start doing the work, we're going to start having the conversation. And as we continue to do the work, we found others were interested in having the conversation as well. They just didn't know where to start. So I think we have to build upon the positive reputation that we have built in this community, and we have to be more forward with the leadership that we have and build upon that.

[00:28:25] Patrick: Yeah. And, you know, I know there are some potential opportunities in the affordable housing arena that, you know, aren't fully baked yet, but that are coming up. But the idea that you've got your eyes open for those things now and exploring those things is pretty exciting. Let me just ask this. What do you, and I'll ask this for both of you, or either or both of you can answer it. What are the greatest leadership challenges that you're facing today in leading a foundation like this?

[00:28:59] Geales: Well, I think we have to be bold and we have to be courageous, and sometimes that's not easy to do.

So we also have to be resilient, and not everybody's going to agree with the things, especially in a community like this. Not everybody's going to agree with what the Bonnell foundation thinks needs to be done. But that doesn't mean we shouldn't be stalwart and move forward with what our board and our staff believes we ought to be doing. So we have to do that.

[00:29:42] Patrick: What about you, Ashley? What do you find to be your biggest leadership challenges in this work.

[00:29:54] Ashley: Another tough question.

I agree with Geales. You know, we have to be bold and we have to be courageous. Thinking back to our conversation about our mission statement and talking about current needs versus future needs in a brighter tomorrow, finding a sense of balance and keep helping organizations keep the lights on, as well as looking ahead to transformational work in our community. And, you know, sometimes that can be a challenge, having to make those tough decisions, because we are essentially, we're the only funder in our community. So people pull on us for their basic needs, but we also have to keep our pulse on how can we advance our community for the future.

[00:30:50] Patrick: Yeah, the today and the tomorrow piece.

Let me ask you both a couple of questions that I like to ask all my guests, and that will wrap the show with this. So one of the questions I like to ask because I love the stories, think of a leader in your life, past or present or both.

Someone you know personally or maybe someone that you've watched from afar, but a leader in your life that you would say has had profound impact or significant impact on you and on your view of leadership.

Either one of you can take that one first, but I want to hear from both of you on that.

[00:31:31] Geales: So I grew up in Louisiana, and my mother had a really good friend who was just. She had tons of children of her own. She taught Latin in middle school, and she was just the most wonderful and supportive adult in my life. And she never missed an opportunity to tell me, and I was not one of her six children to tell me how proud she was of me. Even when I was a grown up, every time I talked to her on the phone, she would end with, I'm so proud of you. And I've tried to do that as a mom with my own kids. And, you know, I'm also proud of my young staff. And so I think it's. Betty Capeless was her name. She was married to a farmer, a dairy farmer in northwest Louisiana, and she had a lot of tragedy in her life, and it never got her down. So that's who my person is.

[00:32:38] Patrick: Boy, taking the time to let your team know that you're proud of their work. You know, one of the. We've talked a lot on this show about self determination theory and how, you know, the three things that people want in the workplace. It's a psychological framework, but it plays over into employee engagement. What people want in the workplace, they want autonomy, competence, and relatedness. And that relatedness is the part that leaders often leave out. They forget that people want to feel a sense of identity with their leaders and with the mission of the organization. They want to feel connected. They want to feel a sense of purpose for that. And knowing that your leader appreciates your work, sees your good work, is proud of your good work. Wow. That's a major leadership tenet. We don't think about those when we, we don't go to school to learn that, right? In leadership. We learn, you know, we do MBA and we even do organizational leadership. But I don't know, there's very little. I've got a PhD in organizational

leadership, and we didn't do a whole lot on that relatedness piece. You know, it's more about the organization, but the organization is made up of its people. So I love that. What a great story. Who comes to your mind, Ashley, as that leader or one of those leaders for you?

[00:33:59] Ashley: Well, for me, it's a duo, and it would have to be my paternal grandparents.

My grandfather was former military. He was an entrepreneur. He started our family's tile business that he later, after retirement, passed on to my dad. But he was also a pastor, and he was a man of wisdom who, although he was tough on us, I knew he was tough from a very good place. And so it's very often that I remember his words of wisdom as I navigate professional life and even personal life.

And one of his words of wisdom that I often share with Team Bunnelle is, if you don't ask, you don't get. And he used to tell us that quite often. My grandmother was a schoolteacher, and she taught in one of the most rural areas in our county. And my grandma's philosophy was always to reach back, to pull someone else up. And my grandmother passed away in 2009. And even now, people find out that I'm her granddaughter, they'll tell me stories. You know, your grandmother used to put a token, she would slip a token on the corner of my desk when she knew we didn't have lunch money. A lady just told me a month ago, your grandmother knew that my mom was a single mom, and she would often, when I would come home from college, she would often ask me to come by, and she would either have a package for me to take back to school or she would give me money.

And again, this lady's in her sixties, and she remembers that about my grandmother. So my grandmother taught me about legacy building and about how you treat people and the relationships that you build. So I would say, by far, my paternal grandparents.

[00:35:56] Patrick: Both your stories are such a great reminder.

As I'm thinking back on the other stories I hear from my previous guest.

I don't think people don't come onto this show and answer that question with, well, you know, my old boss John was just a great strategist. You know, he really knew how to create where he was just so good with money, or he led the organization with a, you know, he just always knew where to direct people. And it's never those kinds of hard leadership skills. It's. It always comes around to a leader who cares about their people.

[00:36:31] Geales: And this is heart work. You know, working in the foundation world, it's heart work. We're reminded every day how fortunate we are that misses Bonnell set this organization up to help people in Georgetown County. I mean, she said in her letter, I've been involved with charitable giving throughout my life. Along the way, I've learned that the world's needs are unlimited.

Therefore, in order to have an impact in some lasting and meaningful way, I've tried to focus my efforts on Georgetown county.

[00:37:04] Patrick: Yeah.

[00:37:05] Geales: And, you know, when, when your leader has given you that charge, you're just aware every day of a. How fortunate you are to be in this position. But what a big job she gave us to do. I mean, we need to be the best stewards that we can of that extraordinary gift that she gave this community.

[00:37:27] Patrick: It is an extraordinary gift. And it's not like Georgetown county has a ton of foundations and funders, either. I mean, it is a gift. You 60 something thousand people, and yet you've got an asset of \$45 million that you're granting, \$2 million a year.

That's quite a gift and quite an asset for this community. And I just. I applaud you both. I'm impressed with both of you. You inspire me, because, you know, I truly feel. I truly feel that heart piece of that. And yet you're also bringing a lot of business mind to the equation, because there's a lot of business y kind of things you have to do if you're going to steward it. Well. And stewarding doesn't just mean protecting. It means also growing. And you've done that, and you've done it responsibly. So last question, Geales, for both of you.

You're at the top of a mountain. You're given a megaphone, and, I don't know, you got 15 seconds to communicate to all the leaders of the world with the Geales Sands top tenet of leadership, what's most important? What's that thing that we all need to keep in mind that you would.

[00:38:42] Geales: Tell us, look beyond yourself, realize that everybody carries something heavy. And keep that in mind as you go about your daily work and try to be kind and thoughtful and generous with your time and your love and perhaps your money.

[00:39:05] Patrick: Wow. Poignant. Everybody's carrying something heavy.

So true. We are such internal creatures as we only know ourselves, really. I love that. Ashley, what about you? We're going to hand the megaphone off to you and let you talk to the all the leaders of the world. What do we need to know?

[00:39:27] Ashley: We're better together.

Our differences don't necessarily separate us.

They connect us in more ways than one.

And whether it's generational differences or racial differences, whatever they are, they are a connector and not a divider.

[00:39:46] Patrick: Wow.

Okay, so this was a home run. This was a good idea to bring you two on and have you just share and inspire with our listeners. I want to thank you both, your entire team, your board, for what you're doing in this community. I've obviously learned a lot about your foundation and the work that you're doing, the very complex work that you're doing. One of the hardest jobs in the world that you have, and you're not paid accordingly for that, but some, for some reason, you're still doing it. But I just want to thank you. Thank you for engaging me. Thank you for coming on the show. And, folks, for the rest of you, I don't know, I would just encourage you. Get involved in your community, get connected. It takes everybody. We're better together, as Ashley says. So wherever you're listening from, get engaged in some way.

Give to organizations that are making a difference for people. Volunteer your time and your talent.

You know, give of your, what do they say? Your time and your treasure and your talent.

Just get involved because everybody's carrying something heavy. Let's lighten the load. Thanks

both, ladies. For everybody else, we'll see you here next time. Lead on.