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WHY GIVING MATTERS AND HOW EDUCATION COULD LEAD TO MORE PHILANTHROPY

John Nickson.

“We have to learn what it means to be a member of the human race.”

Sir John Madejski, Chancellor of the University of Reading, chairman and sponsor, The John Madejski Academy, Reading.

INTRODUCTION.

I intend to answer the following questions:

Why has giving has been so important to the development of human society?

Why do people give and what motivates them?

Why is philanthropic support for education growing?

How may education help Britain to become a more philanthropic and generous nation?

Learning and education is at the heart of everything you do. Whilst I have relatively little experience of raising money for education in a professional fundraising career of more than 30 years, I have been a trustee of an international sixth form college, I am on the board of a charity working with primary schools in London and I am a trustee of a conservatoire, The Royal College of Music. I am also a donor.

My first fundraising job was with The Samaritans in 1975. My last job was at Tate from where I retired in 2011. One of my projects since has been to write a book whose primary purpose is to persuade those who do not give to follow the example of those who do.

The initial motivation for the book was my concern that only a minority of the wealthy is giving. This is frustrating for those who give as well as for fundraisers. I asked some of the donors I worked with for their opinion. They are also frustrated and they encouraged me to write Giving Is Good For You.

The lack of generosity shown by a majority of the most well off is a problem when the gap between rich and poor is widening. According to the Sunday Times

Rich List, the combined wealth of the 1000 richest people in Britain is estimated to have increased by 300% in the last 12 years whilst average incomes and tax revenues are declining in real terms and charitable giving has fallen by 20% in the last year according to NCVO and CAF.

This matters because we know that the most unequal societies are the most dysfunctional.

I believe that the case for giving is best made by the most generous. I conducted almost 80 interviews with donors and charities in various parts of the country. These interviews were a revelation and extraordinarily inspiring. These are people who refuse to be daunted by the scale of the problems facing us. They prove that it is possible to make a difference by putting the common good above self-interest.

Thus, a book that was originally intended to motivate non-donors has also become a guide to how donors think and how to engage them.

Everyone I met told me that giving had transformed their lives, whether it was a couple funding re-education for sex workers in Newcastle, or another couple funding research into poverty and what could improve the lives of slum dwellers in Bangladesh and those who live in rural poverty in Zimbabwe.

So what do donors think about their peers who do not give? I was surprised by how strongly they feel and how vehemently they expressed their opinions, to such an extent that some of their comments did not get through the lawyers.

Those who give are the fiercest critics of those who do not. Here is just one quotation from one of Britain's most generous billionaire families:

“Consider the unfairness of those who live in Monaco, come back here to their house for so many nights of the year and expect the country to be running properly, the airport to work, the police to turn up when they are burgled. These are expensive things that need to be paid for out of taxation. Who do they think has paid for that bit of the M4 between Heathrow and Brentford before they cruise into Knightsbridge? Some of them may give the odd million here and there but it won't be the same as paying 45% tax on their income. They are possibly giving just 5% of their income.

What has gone wrong is any sense of responsibility. The real problem is the non-dom business for British citizens. The United States has it absolutely right. If you want a US passport, you must pay US tax wherever you are. This non-dom business is causing such inequality and bad feeling...by not taking up the possibility of giving, some of the rich are generating a culture in which they are despised. If we continue to

have a society that encourages unfairness and a lack of responsibility, if some of the rich fail to engage and to contribute, then we are heading for trouble.”

Without exception, everyone I interviewed for my book was driven by a desire and a determination to do good for others rather than for themselves. The most common refrain about giving is: “It seems the right thing to do”. They are making a moral commitment and mind when they see a lack of morality in their peers.

Let us now examine some case studies in my book and I will focus on those involving education so that we may understand better how private money works in partnership with the public sector, from primary schools to universities.

PRIMARY SCHOOLS: HOW MUSIC TRANSFORMS PROSECTS FOR THE YOUNG DISADVANTAGED.

My first subject is Jessop Primary School in Brixton, London. I interviewed Lillian Umekwe, Jessop’s head Teacher and Victoria Sharp, the founder and unpaid Chief Executive of London Music Masters, a charity working with primary schools.

LMM’s pioneering music education programme aims to transform the lives of disadvantaged young people and their families by introducing entire classes to formal classical music tuition and giving them all the opportunity to play and perform with professionals

I asked Victoria Sharp why she founded London Music Masters. She told me that she was struck by the criticism that the intake of music conservatoires was insufficiently diverse. Conservatoires must take the most talented students in order to fulfill their purpose and if they are to remain centres of excellence. The solution to lack of diversity must be to widen the pool of applicants but this would be difficult if the school system was unable to provide high quality music tuition at grass roots level. Victoria, a former banker with Goldman Sachs, set up London Music Masters and began a four year pilot project by targeting two inner London primary schools where a large percentage of the children are from very diverse backgrounds and are on free school meals.

I asked Jessop's head teacher, Lillian Umekwe, what impact LMM was having on the school:

"When I arrived five years ago, the buildings were in such a state that it was impossible to learn. Parents voted with their feet and we only had 180 students. The school was in special measures and on the verge of being closed down....

We now have 400 pupils from forty nationalities. English is the second language for the majority and most are so poor they are entitled to free school meals. But we are now above the national average,

having been at the bottom of the league and our most recent OFSTED report rated us as “outstanding”.

It is hard to find the words to describe the impact LMM has had on the children. They learn valuable technical skills which does wonders for their self confidence. And they have the privilege of learning together. The children learn so much from that, they learn social skills and how to trust and support each other..

Not all of these children will be musicians but because we have given them this experience, they have transferable skills. They now have such self confidence that they believe they can achieve. The greatest impact upon me is seeing the children doing so well, to see them then and now and to realize that some of these children would have been excluded and thrown upon the scrap heap. We would not have been able to achieve any of this without music and London Music Masters. They should be in every school”.

I doubt if Lillian’s wish will come true in the near future. LMM does not have the resources and sufficient public money is not available. However, LMM’s work provides a role model that demonstrates what the highest quality music education can achieve.

We should be concerned about the commitment of government and spending on education and music education in particular. There is an expectation that the private sector should fill the widening gap for

something which has clear and positive social and educational impact as well as artistic and cultural benefit.

The reality is that we are spending much less taxpayer's money on music education than hitherto and the government is looking to the private sector to provide. London Music Masters is an entirely private initiative and entirely privately funded, initially by the Sharp family. However, if LMM is to grow, it must diversify its private funding and also seek statutory funds.

If philanthropy is to grow as the government intends, all concerned including politicians and their policy advisers, must make more effort to understand what motivates donors and how philanthropy works. Benefactors such as Victoria Sharp, give so much time as well as millions of pounds to improve the education and quality of life of our disadvantaged young. The government says it values this kind of work and wants more of it but its actions belie its words, not least in last year's spectacle of the government's attack on donors who use tax relief to make their money go further.

ACADEMIES: HOW PHILANTHROPY HELPS TO EMPOWER YOUNG CITIZENS.

Let us move on to Academy Schools. Originally conceived by the Blair government, the number of academy schools has grown significantly since the election in 2010. I am going to side step arguments

about Academies because that is not part of my brief. My job is to show how philanthropy can be used creatively to transform the prospects of the young.

And by doing so, I hope to give you more insight into the minds of those who give.

My first conversation was with John Nash who since our interview in 2012 has become Lord Nash and an education minister. John and his wife Caroline sponsored the creation of Pimlico Academy in London in 2007. John, who used to work in private equity, has been portrayed in the press as a “barbarian at the gate”. The Observer newspaper ran a headline saying : “Venture capitalists go on the school run: Tycoon and philanthropist John Nash is turning his hand to academies. But should private equity be in the classroom?”

One of the valuable things I have learned during my research is to reject stereotypes. I met a modest, quiet and reflective man who had clearly learned a lot from the formative experience of setting up an academy against formidable opposition. John told me that both he and his wife had had difficult childhoods and unsatisfactory educational experiences which had driven both of them to want to help the disadvantaged young.

In 2007, Pimlico school was in a state of chaos with poor educational standards, disillusioned teachers

who went on strike and lack of discipline bordering on violence. Since 2008, GCSE results in Maths and English have improved by twice the national average. In 2012, 83% of the students who left went on to university and over half of these went on to Russell Group of universities.

Jerry Collins, the Principal told me:

“ 85% of our students come from the poorest 30% of wards in the country. 60 languages are spoken. 40% are on free school meals. There is a lot of deprivation and many of our students come to us without the educational attainment, including reading, expected of most children of that age.”

Describing what it was like when he became Principal in 2008, Jerry told me:

“ Neither the students nor the staff had any belief in themselves. After we had sorted things out, someone asked how we had managed to get rid of all those violent children and find these nice young people. I had to tell her that these were the same kids she had seen before. We had just treated them with respect and encouraged them to believe in themselves”.

What struck me about John Nash and Jerry Collins, was that they were all driven by the same ethos. The last thing John Nash said to me was “ We should teach the young that they need to be imaginative and

compassionate.” The first thing Jerry Collins told me was:

“ We try to imbue a sense of compassion in our students. We want them to have a clear work ethic, to be highly literate, to be knowledgeable, independent and ambitious. In a way, compassion is almost the most important. We want them to be the kind of children who will hold out a hand and help others rather than just look out for their own needs”.

I am emphasizing this point about compassion because it is a theme which runs throughout all the interviews I conducted for my book.

I learned two other things. The first is about the nature of philanthropy. Jerry Collins told me:

“There is a misconception about philanthropy. It is not just about money. John and Caroline’s contribution in terms of time is far bigger than the money they put into the school. It is this that has made the difference and given the school a new sense of direction, not the money. Interestingly, the students who are most keen to fundraise here are the most deprived. If we can somehow get communities to help themselves, that would make a tremendous difference. If philanthropy is just the remit of the rich, you are then cutting out many people who wish to contribute and who have the will to do so”.

The second point is about commitment. I asked John Nash what he had learned from his involvement with Pimlico Academy:

“ Experienced business people tend to underestimate the judgement calls required when working with charities. The issues are often complex. I have founded a lot of companies and businesses over the years but this is undoubtedly the most rewarding thing I have been involved with. 1200 kids are a big responsibility. Rather than go off and found new schools, we thought we should concentrate on Pimlico and ensure that we really understand the complex issues involved. Being a teacher is not easy. It is a very challenging job”.

I visited another Academy, in Reading, because I had come to know its principal sponsor over a number of years when I was head of fundraising at the Royal Academy of Arts in London. John Madejski is perhaps best known as the chairman of Reading Football Club. He is a man with a highly developed sense of community who believe our collective sense of obligation is weakening.

John was invited to Downing Street when Tony Blair was Prime Minister. Blair asked him to fund an Academy in the East End of London, but John refused. He felt committed to Reading because he doubted that he could make the same commitment in terms of time and energy to a school in London.

John says that his donation to the John Madejski Academy is the best thing he has ever done. He was motivated to give because he left school without any formal qualifications and understands how vulnerable young people can be. He was, however, surprised to learn that the school day begins with a breakfast club because so many children are not given the first meal of the day at home. For John, giving children a start in life had taken on a new meaning. He told me:

“Most of us are so stupid and so ignorant about life today. The depth of ignorance amongst the middle classes is truly shocking. I am very grateful that I have been able to do something to make life better for our kids locally. The change the academy has brought to South Reading is dramatic. Education has been the key to helping the underprivileged, education is the key to effective change, nothing could be more important”.

I asked Nicola Maytum , Principal of the John Madejski Academy, for her view on what John’s philanthropy has contributed. She told me:

“He wanted a school in this part of Reading so that the local people can believe that they are worth it and to believe that their children can achieve. The students are able to visit different businesses all because of him. Through Sir John, we have a partnership with

Reading University which is working with us on a literary programme and a teacher training programme. A partnership with Reading Football Club has helped us develop an elite sports programme and has also helped us to take over the local leisure centre which was going to close.”

Before we move on to higher education, let us review what our three case studies tell us about philanthropists. All three donors are driven by a sense of obligation and responsibility to share their good fortune, to make life better for others and, crucially, to solve problems. All show exceptional commitment in the amount of time they give. They use their networks to the advantage of the projects they support.

Victoria Sharp of London Music Masters is chair of the London Philharmonic Orchestra . Thus, primary school children have access to professional musicians and have been able to perform at The Royal Festival Hall in London. John Nash has used his time and money to fund a programme of curriculum related visits to places the students would not dream of going and a programme of distinguished speakers visiting Pimlico Academy has transformed their horizons. John Madejski has used his own local commitments to enhance the impact of the experience that his academy can offer.

HIGHER EDUCATION AND PHILANTHROPY: GOING FOR GROWTH

There has been a dramatic increase in giving to the higher education sector. Why is this and what motivates donors to support universities and colleges?

When Rory Brooks graduated from Manchester, he didn't think he would visit the university or Manchester again but when he and his wife Elizabeth went to work in the US in their twenties, they were impressed by how their colleagues were supporting their colleges and communities. This had a tremendous influence upon how they felt and behaved, an influence they would not have had in London in the 1970's and 1980's. Returning to London, Rory and Elizabeth were now in a position to make significant gifts of money and to commit their time and energy to making a real difference.

The creation of the new University of Manchester in 2004 gave the Brookses an opportunity. Rory told me:

“We could see that higher education in Britain would need more investment. We were also looking for a cause that would have impact beyond academia and Manchester. Poverty on a global basis is the most serious inequality we face and that, in the midst of so much wealth and prosperity, it is simply not right that we should have so many people who are living desperate lives”.

Rory and Elizabeth established the Brooks World Poverty Institute as a centre of research in Manchester University bringing together academics and professionals with the common goal of eradicating poverty.

The Brookses were always clear that the money they could give was small in relation to the scale of a massive global problem. However, they believed they could punch above their weight by promoting research that would lead to better policies and outcomes for the very poor. I asked Professor David Hulme, the Institute's Director, for a view. He told me that the University had been interested in the problems of poverty for 60 years. He said:

“ There was so much more to be done which we could not afford to do. Good philanthropists such as Rory are interested in pushing back the boundaries. When well executed, philanthropy can enable universities to be much more flexible in the way they work, particularly in research.

The main benefit is that funding from the Brookses has enabled us to attract more PhD students, thereby establishing a successor generation of academic professionals who undertake work which was previously unaffordable and for which there is little public funding.

For example, in Bangladesh, research into how slum dwellers build and maintain their homes has led to

recommendations that could radically transform urban planning with significant benefits for the very poorest. Research programmes in Zimbabwe enabled the collection of previously unavailable data and this has enabled the country's academics to remain connected to the outside world. By working with local politicians and civil servants from a research and evidence based point of view, the Zimbabwean government is starting to think about the measures it can take to rescue a failing state."

From medieval through Victorian to modern times, philanthropy has been responsible for founding and funding our great universities. However, only a dozen years ago, the number of academic institutions attracting private donations was small, in contrast to the USA and other countries. This was before the reduction in state funding for the higher education sector.

In the last five years, however, funds raised annually have increased by 35% from just over £500 million a year to almost £700 million. Moreover, giving to the higher education sector has grown since the start of the recession, in contrast to North America, whilst other charitable giving appears to be in decline. I asked Dame Nancy Rothwell, Vice-Chancellor of Manchester University, what makes universities so appealing to major benefactors. She told me that there had been a tremendous change in ambition and in the approach to philanthropy:

“We have been successful because...after the merger(we) came in with a very clear sense of purpose: to lift our game with a strong commitment to outstanding research, excellent education and social responsibility. This has changed us. We have put a lot of effort into being accessible. We are committed to producing graduates who have a strong sense of social responsibility and who have a commitment to volunteering.

We have lost almost all the taxpayer’s investment in students. Investment in research is very low and there is no capital funding for universities. However, we must be positive. There are great opportunities for philanthropists and I welcome them. I want our donors to see themselves as investors. If you invest well in higher education, you can achieve a huge return in terms of societal and personal impact.

The Brooks World Poverty Institute is making a real impact. One of our staff in the institute has been doing research into supply chains between the northern and southern hemispheres. One result has been to link southern producers with northern companies and that has real impact over and above the value of academic research. We have had a great exchange of students through the BWPI. David Hulme and BWPI have won a £6 million investment from the Department for International Development. This would probably not have happened without the reputation we have earned and would not have been possible without the philanthropy of the Brookses.”

I asked Chris Cox, Director of Development for the University of Manchester, for his perspective on why philanthropists should give money to universities. He told me that one of the most important factors determining success was that the university was sufficiently imaginative to give him time to develop relationships with donors so that they could help shape a thematic fundraising programme. This meant that gifts were strategically aligned and also meant that the university was able to develop a sophisticated message which was more likely to appeal to donors. Chris told me:

“The easiest way to describe our approach is to say what we don’t do. We do not play the alma mater, sense of loyalty, you-must-give-back card. We focus more on the issues the university is addressing beyond the campus, that we are an effective agent for change in issues that are as important to our donors as to ourselves. Poverty is a key area for us, as are social cohesion, cancer research and regenerative medicine.

All this enables us to talk about the university as an agent for change and progress. Our case for support is much more about the future rather than the university”.

I asked Rory Brooks what impact philanthropy has had upon their lives and if he could recommend giving to those who have yet to commit:

“We have found that although our giving is planned, our philanthropy has taken us on an unplanned and unexpected journey which has enabled us to discover and unleash creativity in ourselves and the people we work with. It really is possible to make a difference even with limited funds. And whilst it is our aim to use our good fortune to help others, our lives have also been transformed”.

WHY DO WE GIVE?

More than half of us give regularly and two thirds of us are also volunteers on a regular basis. It seems that we are wired or programmed to be altruistic as well as competitive and this has given us an evolutionary advantage. We are social creatures who thrive on mutual obligation. It seems that just as the imperative need to eat and to have sex are rewarded with pleasurable feelings, giving also makes us feel good.

Wherever we have established stable societies and encouraged philanthropy, we have created social and cultural wealth as well as personal riches. The foundations of the civil society we enjoy today and perhaps take for granted, law, education, medicine, welfare and culture, would not have been laid without philanthropy.

In Victorian times, charitable giving was a staple in every part of society, including the working classes. Charity was often the preserve of women and this eventually helped lead them to their emancipation. By the 1890's, government was spending about 10%

of GDP and philanthropy was at its peak. By the 1960's, government was spending over 50 % of GDP, much of it on the welfare state. Philanthropy and volunteering appeared to be in decline.

Philanthropy could not cope with the vast increase in poverty that accompanied the industrial revolution. After World War Two, the British people voted against poverty and inequality and for a welfare state. However, long term political, economic and social trends during the past 30 years, not least lower taxes, have led to big reductions in public spending. Now many of the world's most developed countries face the most serious economic crisis in a generation.

The state is in retreat and in the UK, we are experiencing big reductions in spending for parts of the education system and the welfare budget in particular.

We need philanthropy more than ever, to help strengthen a voluntary sector that has to meet much more demand and to support the higher education and cultural sectors where the state is now contributing so much less.

HOW TO BECOME A MORE GENEROUS SOCIETY.

What do we have to do to revive the spirit of philanthropy? For better or worse, the state had crowded out charitable giving by providing the wealthy with an excuse not to give, namely that they

were contributing through paying high tax. This was certainly true between 1945 and 1980 but it is no longer the case. Margaret Thatcher believed that reducing the top rate of tax would encourage the rich to set up charitable foundations following the example of the wealthy in the US.

We all know that this has not happened on a significant scale, for one principle reason: we do not have a national culture of giving in Britain and we have not had one for more than a hundred years. Charitable giving over the past 30 years has remained steady as a percentage of GDP but has not reflected the great increase in personal prosperity we have witnessed. The uncomfortable truth is that the poorest 10% of the population give proportionately much more than the top 10%, and the most wealthy appear to be giving the least of all.

We are in danger of losing the plot by forgetting why giving matters. Here are some measures we could take to encourage more giving:

Firstly, government must understand what motivates donors to give and then adopt consistent policies that recognize that the majority of those who give do so because they value the common good above their own self-interest. Most donors do not give to escape tax but use tax relief to enable their money to go further.

Philanthropy will always be about personal choice. Society should be doing whatever is necessary to persuade those with surplus funds to convert them into social capital rather than into another yacht.

We need to simplify tax reliefs and extend the range of assets that may be donated. We should follow US practice and encourage life-time legacies whereby donors gift capital to charities during their lives and receive income as if from an annuity. Legacies, whether made during life or on death, are the most effective means of building endowments.

We should not give honours to those who do not pay UK tax and to business leaders who cannot demonstrate philanthropic commitment, whether in terms of giving or volunteering. We should give more honours to those who volunteer and give.

More tax relief means spending more public money and we need to be sure that this is being spent in the public interest. We need a tighter definition of public benefit, something which almost certainly will not be welcomed by charities but I see no alternative if the Treasury is to be convinced to dig deeper into public funds.

Charities will need to show even greater transparency and accountability if they are to justify the use of public money via tax relief and attract donors, particularly those with large sums to give. Whilst many charities in the education, health and cultural

sectors have been conspicuously successful in raising money from the private sector, standards vary. I asked two donors to be specific about what they expect from charities.

John Studzinski of The Blackstone Group has divided his time between New York and London since the 1980's. I asked him what charities should learn from his long experience as a philanthropist:

“The Brits think you cannot teach volunteering but that is rubbish...if every child over the age of 10 had a few hours pushing people around in a push chair, their outlook on life would be transformed....you cannot teach a child to give but you can teach the value of service, the importance of respecting the old, the sick and the different.

Half the richest 10% don't give. They have to be taught. It can take time. You have to get people engaged before they give, through outreach and advocacy. You, as a fundraiser, have to be able to share your passion with them and to get them to respond by sharing their ideas.

Don't ask for money straight away...the key to persuading people to give is to have a professional relationship with them. People need to get to know, to like and to respect the people they are dealing with. People need to feel trust and that they are going to be treated as a human being and not just as a cheque book”.

John, in common with many other major donors, is only likely to make a significant philanthropic investment if he feels he can make a significant difference to the causes he supports. For example, he has helped Human Rights Watch to become a much stronger international force by sitting on its board and using his contacts with international business people and journalists. At Tate, where he became a trustee, John contributed intellectually as well as financially to the creation of Tate Modern.

I also sought a perspective from Theresa Lloyd who may be known to those of you who have read her book *Why Rich People Give*. (The sequel *Richer Lives*, co-written with Dr. Beth Breeze, will be published on 30 September). Theresa is also a philanthropist as well as a consultant and has been a senior manager with Save The Children and Action Aid. This is what she told me:

“I believe profoundly that institutions cannot be successful in fundraising without an institutional culture of engagement. Everyone needs to share in the excitement of plans for the future and be able to articulate why their cause matter, the difference that a donation will make to people’s lives, and share their passion and professional knowledge.

Major donors see their gift as an investment in people, leadership and a project. Sometimes donors will feel they are investing in a start-up. The idea that you sign a cheque, walk away and get a standard report a year later is way out of date. What donors

ENJOY about giving is the importance of a sense of partnership with the causes they support, and they put a value on learning, whether it is how to conserve a painting or deliver water in very poor countries.

I think some people don't give because they are not asked properly and are cultivated by the wrong people. Too few charities, with the exception of some arts, higher education, hospitals and household-name charities, have learned these lessons and too many don't ask properly because they do not offer partnership and engagement with those who lead the institution and deliver the programmes. They are often naïve about why people would want to support them. They don't bother to get to know people, their interests and motivations. They use a mass marketing approach. They seem to be unaware that donors will usually prefer to continue supporting a charity if the experience proves worthwhile and they feel they are making a difference.

How are they to know? By being told properly about the impact that their donation in a way that makes them confident their generosity has added value. They want to go to interesting events where the aid worker has come straight off the plane with dirty finger nails or the conservator can show the sixteenth century painting on which they have been working, and where they can engage in real conversations with people at the cutting edge of their work, and who share their passions, rather than have to plough through some impenetrable jargon too often found in impersonal letters from a fundraiser".

So now we know. The key to successful fundraising is meaningful engagement and inspirational leadership. The enemy of philanthropy is undue process and the routine.

However, I believe that the only way to create a real and lasting culture of giving in our country is by using education to inculcate values and an understanding that giving, in the widest sense of the word, is an expression of our humanity.

CREATING A CULTURE OF GIVING BY LEARNING TO BE GENEROUS.

Let us turn to another educational institution to demonstrate what this could mean in practice.

Atlantic College is part of an international movement, UWC or United World Colleges, which gives a transformational education, based upon the International Baccalaureate, and an ethos of service to others, to young people aged sixteen to eighteen from all over the world, most of them funded by scholarships. Founded in the early 1960's in the deep frost of the Cold War, as a means of bringing young people together and fostering peace when nuclear war seemed a real threat, UWC is needed more than ever.

I became involved with Atlantic College in 1990, attracted by a cause that is devoted to eradicating

ignorance and fear and to celebrating difference and diversity. I was inspired by the possibility of a young Palestinian and a young Israeli sharing a room, learning and serving together and become friends at the most formative time of their lives. I was a governor of Atlantic College for 12 years and funded a scholarship for a young refugee from Rwanda who I have continued to support through university and two further years of postgraduate study in the US.

Having been involved in the creation of the International Baccalaureate, Atlantic College has taken another pioneering step forward, which I believe could play an important role in developing a culture of giving in the UK. Students may now leave with the Atlantic Diploma as well as the IB. I asked Jill Longson, vice- chair of the college and a donor to explain:

“The IB is an excellent qualification but we believe our students are learning something in addition to a specific curriculum, an extra piece of magic. Our mission is about using education to unite people in a more sustainable, socially just and peaceful world and the new diploma is designed to reflect this and the EXPERIENCE the students have as well as their academic achievement”.

Jill told me that the College has four new faculties that are on a par with the IB faculties: Global, Environment, Social Justice and Outdoor. Each faculty is led by a member of the academic staff. All students have to be involved with all four faculties and

specialise in one of them. Every six weeks, the college stops all academic classes for two days and holds a conference. A recent conference was 'Young Voices In the Middle East', attended by a Jordanian journalist, a Palestinian cartoonist and an Israeli diplomat, giving the students a rare opportunity to examine one of the world's most complex and challenging problems in depth. The emphasis is upon personal initiative and responsibility and the students drive much of what they do.

I asked Jill what we might learn from the Atlantic College Diploma given that the current Secretary of State for Education seems keen on a core curriculum biased in favour of attainment:

“ We are committed to providing a value based education. If you don't have a set of values that drive every aspect of school life then what is the point? The values of respect, service, a sense of idealism, personal challenge, compassion, the celebration of difference and an appreciation of international and cultural understanding, these values are absolutely fundamental to the ethos of Atlantic College and the new diploma is a manifestation of it. I find it very sad that they are not implicitly part of life in every school.”

I began with a quotation from Sir John Madejski and I will now quote it in full:

“We have to learn what it means to be a member of the human race. We must teach empathy. Part of our

problem today is that people, institutions, businesses and government lack empathy and this is reflected in a weakened sense of community and social obligation. By encouraging young people to think of others, they will find that they become empowered themselves. They will learn to understand what they can do for others, whatever their circumstances. You don't necessarily need money to care about someone else".

Everyone I interviewed agrees that we need to capture the imagination of children at an early age if they are to be "hard wired" with a sense of awareness of and commitment to others.

There are some interesting and worthwhile initiatives in schools to encourage the young to be more philanthropic, such as the Youth and Philanthropy Initiative. However valuable they are, they are limited by lack of funding and only a minority of schools are involved. We do know that many schools encourage their pupils to engage with charities and fundraising but this is not always systematic or linked to learning about civil society and social needs.

If our government is committed to stimulating more philanthropy, we need education to be more value based, with a formal programme of engagement with the voluntary sector via the curriculum. We should teach children what it means to belong to a civil society and what role is expected from them as citizens. We should expect the young to commit to

volunteering and community service whilst they are at school.

Those who excel would be awarded a national diploma, modeled on the Atlantic Diploma, a demonstration of engagement and commitment that could be required by universities and colleges and also by employers as evidence of commitment, seriousness of purpose and awareness of and an ability to work with others. The diploma would also be awarded to students in private schools. It is particularly important that the children of the privileged should be aware of their responsibilities.

Public spending will be constrained for several years. Accordingly, we need a stronger voluntary sector. Our government tells us it wishes to encourage more philanthropy. All political parties should consider how to strengthen the voluntary sector by encouraging more giving.

I believe that the only way to stimulate philanthropy for the long term is by educating our children to become citizens with a sense of responsibility and obligation to others. Education is the key to more philanthropy.

Atlantic College's Diploma is a fine example of best practice. If you ask universities in the UK and the US, they will tell you that they are delighted to take Atlantic College students because they are mature,

focused and committed to others. This is the example we should follow.

Atlantic College was established fifty years ago by philanthropists who believed we can make the world more peaceful and sustainable by bringing young people together and uniting them in a commitment to serving their fellow men and women. These philanthropists fulfilled their vision. We have much to learn from their example, not least that giving is good for all of us.

John Nickson. August 2013.

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John Nickson is one of Britain's most experienced fundraising directors. He was head of fundraising for The British Council, English National Opera, The Royal Academy of Arts and Tate. He is also a donor and has served as a trustee mentor and advisor to education, arts and development charities for over thirty-five years. He is the author of GIVING IS GOOD FOR YOU: WHY BRITAIN SHOULD BE BOTHERED AND GIVE MORE, published by Biteback Publishing, www.bitebackpublishing.com

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