

## Final version of episode 4

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[music]

**Grace:** [00:00:19] Welcome to *Giving Done Right*, a podcast on everything you need to know to make an impact with your charitable giving. I'm grace Nicolette.

**Phil:** [00:00:26] And I'm Phil Buchanan. Hey Grace.

**Grace:** [00:00:28] Hey Phil.

**Phil:** [00:00:28] Today, we are going to be talking to Tiffany Cooper Gueye. She's the chief operating officer at Blue Meridian, which is a funder. They bring together different funders to support nonprofits that are really transforming people's lives. So she's a funder now, but before she ran something called BELL, it's now called BellXcel, based in Boston, but it's a national nonprofit with a focus on combating summer learning loss, which is the academic backsliding that occurs for all kids, but is particularly pronounced for low income kids.

Tiffany amazingly became CEO at 29. She has a undergraduate degree in psychology and a PhD in measurement and evaluation. So she is just an ideal person to talk to about being a good donor, not being a bad donor, how donors can think about or understand whether they're making the difference they want to make. She's also on the CEP board and she's a terrific person. So I'm excited about it.

**Grace:** [00:01:27] Yes. When I think about the field of philanthropy and the people that I look up to, I think Tiffany would be high up on my list. And this is a conversation that actually has a lot of very practical takeaways for everyone. I learned quite a bit from it.

And so I'm excited to dive in.

Welcome, Tiffany, to the podcast!

**Tiffany:** [00:01:43] Thank you! Happy to be here.

**Phil:** [00:01:45] Hey Tiffany.

**Tiffany:** [00:01:46] Hi Phil.

**Grace:** [00:01:48] So today we're going to talk about good donors and bad donors. And Tiffany, we were excited to have you because you've been a nonprofit CEO and now you're a funder. I was wondering if you could start by telling us a bit about your role running a national nonprofit and what it is now that you do at Blue Meridian.

**Tiffany:** [00:02:04] Sure. I ran a national nonprofit for about nine years. And for 10 years before that, I had helped to scale and operate that organization, um, so that we were

delivering our programs with increasing quality, increasing impact, to a growing number of young people across the country. So when I took over as the CEO, it was a great privilege and honor to think about the next generation of that work and how we could deliver the greatest possible impact. And my primary job was fundraising of course.

**Grace:** [00:02:37] And how about your role now at Blue Meridian?

**Tiffany:** [00:02:40] At Blue Meridian, I, um, newly the chief operating officer. As you know, Blue Meridian is a philanthropic platform that is aiming to find solutions to poverty and help them scale. And we do that by partnering with philanthropists aggregating capital, and finding the best solutions that exist today and helping them do their best work in the country. And in our case, it's to US poverty for children and families.

**Grace:** [00:03:09] It sounds like it's a very evidence-based and strategic approach that you're hoping to take at Blue Meridian.

**Tiffany:** [00:03:15] Yeah, we're trying. And I think there is a lot known about what will make a difference for children and families. And there is a lot that's funded. And I don't think those things overlap enough. And so at Blue Meridian, we are trying to put resources behind the things that we believe have the best shot of making a difference. And our belief in that comes from the evidence base they've built up.

**Phil:** [00:03:41] Tiffany, can you give us an example of something that works, that there's just not enough funding for it, even though we know it works?

**Tiffany:** [00:03:50] For example, Year Up, which is a Boston-based workforce development player that does incredible work across the country to identify what they call opportunity talent. So these are typically young individuals between the ages of 18 and 29 who are disconnected from school. So they're not on a four-year college degree path or they're disconnected from work, so they are unemployed or they're underemployed. There may be in a low wage job that will not sustain their families and certainly not sustain their families over time. So they work with these folks to get them trained up and prepared, and then partnered with their corporate partners, um, so that they can have family sustaining wage jobs that grow in wages over time. But Year Up actually has, with a rigorous study, been able to demonstrate that their graduates get jobs at very high rates and make something like 58% more in wages than a control group within two years. So they're also on a trajectory to keep increasing their wages over time. And that's the sort of thing we want to see.

**Grace:** [00:04:56] I think what's so unique about your perspective is that you come from both the perspective of a nonprofit leader and also a funder. You mentioned your experience with fundraising before your current role. I think the prevailing narrative that's out there about nonprofits is often that they are poorly run, that there are a lot of scandals and, you know, the whole sector sort of this mess.

I think that's often the narrative that we see that donors pick up, especially newer ones. But the reality, I think is that it's often the other way around. Sometimes there are examples of donors behaving badly that we're less likely to hear about. And donors really do contribute

to the ecosystem that nonprofits are in. I'm wondering if you could share some examples that you've seen in your experience of donors behaving badly and the impact that it's made.

**Tiffany:** [00:05:43] Actually, as you started talking, I was thinking something different. I was just so surprised by this idea that large swaths of nonprofits would be considered poorly run or a mess or, you know, riddled with scandal. And that's just not my impression at all.

I guess that is one of the ways in which philanthropy perhaps behaves badly in that you have to realize the vast majority, if not all people in nonprofits, running nonprofits are trying to make a difference. These are folks not looking to rob anyone or create scandal, or certainly nobody wakes up thinking, let me run my business poorly today.

I think what often happens is that there's a perception when you look at the financials, when you look at the asset base, where you look at the balance sheet, maybe even when you look at their ability to retain employees or grow year over year, but you don't see the needle moving in the direction you want, or you don't see a lot of financial strength versus ability.

That's not, I don't think solely on the shoulders of the nonprofit leaders. They're not getting capitalized in the ways that they would need to run a successful business. I think that's often the case. And it's something, Phil, you write about often, this idea of unrestricted philanthropy, as opposed to project-based or philanthropists that ignore the need for overhead. When you starve organizations of the resources they need to actually pay for the overhead that would strengthen their organization, strengthen their financials, then of course, year over year over year, you're going to keep seeing what reinforces your opinion about how poorly run nonprofits are.

**Grace:** [00:07:20] Following up on that, if I may, you know, there can be this perception that if you give a nonprofit unrestricted funding, well, one, it may be hard to measure the impact, but two, there is this sort of fat cat perception where it will be bloated organization. It may not contribute to the impact of the work. And I guess I'm wondering, what would you say to a donor who is afraid of that being the outcome of their giving?

**Tiffany:** [00:07:46] I'll say a couple of the practices at Blue Meridian that I think would help a lot of donors feel more comfortable with giving unrestricted funds.

One is that we put a lot of trust in the leader and in the board of the organization. And you have to remember a good functioning board is meant to do the job of holding an organization accountable for its impact and how it manages and stewards the funds they've received. And so to the extent that you can, evaluate the track record of the board, the nonprofit leader through their audit statements, for example, through their 990s and get any reassurance that it's a functioning board.

That's what nonprofit boards do. It's actually an insult to anybody who is serving in a volunteer role on a board to say, "I think you're going to become fat cats and not deliver on the impact when we get into the grant." That's what these people are doing as part of how they're giving back and making an impact. So we trusting the leaders in the boards and...

not blindly kick the tires on, you know, who's on their board? How have they put their board together? How long has this leader been in place? And so the earlier point to the extent that their balance sheet and their reserves don't read as stellar, to what extent has restricted capital limited their ability to do better in that regard?

You know, I think the other thing that we do and we try to do better and better over time is we try to establish a set of mutual accountabilities around the impact that is expected. To the point about, you know, "I fear that my unrestricted dollars won't result in impact." We try to get alignment on the front end about the intended impact of the organization.

You intend to see growth. What kind of growth? You intend to see wage gains? What kind of wage gains? You intend to build capacity in a key way? How many folks do you want to hire? Great. Let's put those on paper as your commitment. That's how you're going to use the money. The funds we give you are still unrestricted.

They're flexible. We don't want a project-based budget where you tell us how you spent against those objectives. But if you deliver those objectives on the other side of this grant, then, you know, we've achieved something together that we wanted to, that both of us wanted to. And I think that would help ease some of the worries you described. And unrestricted doesn't mean unaccountable.

**Phil:** [00:09:59] My experience is it's simultaneously true that historically, although it's fluctuated, the public's level of trust in nonprofits is pretty high and that among big donors in particular, there can be this real distrust that leads to what we're talking about -- wanting to restrict money, really look at things like overhead ratios, which I think a lot of individual donors rely on because they say, well, that way I know whether they're bloated, like Grace was saying or inefficient. We've surveyed tens and tens of thousands of nonprofits, and we've seen that what nonprofits desperately want and need and what correlates with their belief that they're, you know, able to have more impact is that unrestricted multiyear support. And that's so crucial right now because we're in the middle of it, of, you know, multiple national crises between a pandemic, the resulting economic downturn, the reckoning on structural racism.

I'm not even naming all the crises. While we record this, you know, the West Coast is on fire. And if you're leading a nonprofit, what you need is the flexibility to be able to do what is needed that aligns with your mission. Many of the listeners of this podcast are individual donors, but on the foundation side, we've seen almost no change over the years in providing more unrestricted money. On the individual donor side, we see people relying on administrative cost ratios as measures to just as much as they used to.

Do you think that this...all of these crises and the recognition of what nonprofits have to do and the way they have to adapt might finally shift things, break us out as some of these bad habits?

**Tiffany:** [00:11:37] I would hope so. I think that the more we can, together, all of us in this sector, surface the stories of the incredible nimbleness and responsiveness of the sector through all of these crises? I mean, it's been extraordinary what I've seen. And if we tell

those stories, well, it'll make it the difference. What I suspect is that the donors you're describing are using restricted funding and these ratios as a proxy for what they think a foundation staff would have done for them.

You know, maybe they feel nervous. I'm an individual donor. I don't want to build a big foundation around my philanthropy. I don't want to have all these staff out doing due diligence. And you know, these couple of metrics might help me feel more assured that the money will generate. And I would just say, don't put too much hope in those as telling you what you need to know.

In fact, they can be really limiting to impact. All of what you just described is exactly why restricted funding can be so troublesome actually? You know, you could imagine a scenario where an organization is rich with restricted funding to do in-person programming, you know, and urban community in schools, let's say even.

And then all of a sudden these schools all shut down, but all of their funding is restricted to programs in these schools. And there are other things that those communities might need or other ways in which they might be a resource, but the restrictions of their funding prevent them from acting. I mean, that would be a disaster for the mission of that organization, and I don't think aligned with the intent of the donor supporting them. So, the flexibility is really key. And I think this moment is going to shine a light on it.

**Phil:** [00:13:15] And there's a trust issue as we're talking about in terms of also trusting people who are closest to issues and communities and experiences, right? That's sometimes that's underneath this, maybe, unspoken?

**Tiffany:** [00:13:29] I think that's right. I do think there's a trust piece. And I think part of what many in our sector are paying more attention to than they have in the past is race and the role of race and some of the problems we're trying to solve, like poverty.

What is the role of race and some of the solutions we're funding? What is the role of race in how we're making funding decisions? And how we're finding solutions? And what we consider to be good solutions? And I think wrapped up in a bunch of that is trust as well.

**Phil:** [00:14:01] You're on our board at center for effective philanthropy, of course. And several years ago you spoke to our staff and you told a story that you then let me write up as well about your own experiences as a young black girl, going to school in a overwhelmingly white area, and how that led you to ultimately the career choices that you made. Can you talk a little bit about that?

**Tiffany:** [00:14:33] I did go to school at an all-white school districts, in a white school. There were 12 of us bussed from inner city Boston to participate in a racial integration program for that suburban district, which otherwise wouldn't have had any black students. And I did have an experience in third grade where a small tussle over a tire swing at recess resulted in a little girl saying to me, "well, at least I'm not Black."

And she leveled me and ruined my experience on the playground that day. But also just put me in a little bit of a, a spin emotionally around what did she even mean? What is she talking

about? And then I started noticing the world differently and what people really were believing and seeing and meaning by the Black experience.

And I became committed to a country and a world where all people have the same potential and should be given the opportunities to realize that potential. And so I've always tried to do work that will create outcomes that are the same or equal and not race correlated as the way they have been historically in this country and unfortunately still are.

And so that's why I do the work I do. And so when we think about the solutions that we want to get behind, we have to also think about the extent to which they address race. And one way, not the only way, but one way you do that is by asking, did this solution, and does this leadership team represent proximity to this problem or this issue either because they are diverse racially or because they have lived experiences or because they're tapping into it and therefore have a point of view on it? And I know I always felt in running the nonprofit that I ran -- I was the CEO for nine years, but I was involved for almost two full decades -- that whole time I woke up every day and led that work and whatever role I was in with a core belief, in every inch of my body and all of my spirit, and brought it with me everyday to work that all children have enormous potential. And it drove what I did and I had real lived experience with it and a real commitment for it.

And I made choices about, you know, does it make sense, for example, to do this randomized controlled trial study to demonstrate the efficacy of our program at this particular time with this community? When I know as a Black American that not all Black people trust studies. They don't want to be a part of a randomized control trial.

I know how hard it is to get them on board with that, because I know what the Black community has experienced in that regard. And I have an appreciation for it. That's not limited to me being Black. Lots of people can appreciate that and know that history. And so the question is: with what we're funding and the ways in which we're trying to address poverty or whatever it is you're trying to address climate change, are we taking account of the role of race and the role of that leadership team in that solution and addressing it?

**Grace:** [00:17:26] You mentioned randomized control trials. And I think for folks who only have like a cursory understanding of what those are, my understanding is as far as it's the gold standard in understanding whether there is impact given the reticence from the Black community.

What was that project like?

**Tiffany:** [00:17:44] Well, at the organization I was running, it's now called BellXcel, there has always been a, in that organization's DNA, a commitment to evidence and continuous improvement. You know, you can only continuously improve in my opinion from data and evidence. You get to a point, I think when you're collecting data and understanding your impact, where you do want the most rigorous evidence...something that would tell you that your model or your effort or your strategy is making a difference that couldn't have otherwise occurred on its own. So, a randomized controlled trial is often the way to do that because it can eliminate biases of all sorts, and it provides you with what's considered the

most valid way to assess "Yep, that impact happened as a result only of that intervention as opposed to something else." So, I think it's an important part of the toolkit of understanding the efficacy of something and certainly of our collective evidence base of understanding, generally speaking, what works. That said, it's not the only way. There are other rigorous ways to study a program.

There are different research designs, but I will tell you an RCT, of course is not always needed. It's not always appropriate. It's not always the best thing to do. So, I think in general, we chose to do one because we did feel that at BellXcel, we were offering summer learning programs in the face of overwhelming evidence that kids were losing skills in the summer months, if they were from a disadvantaged household.

So there was mounting evidence of what's called 'summer learning loss,' but there wasn't a lot of evidence that you could mitigate it. There were lots of things, efforts to mitigate it, but not enough pointing to the results of programs and interventions that could turn that around. And so we felt like we happened to be well positioned, with the kind of unrestricted capital we were getting from Edna McConnell Clark Foundation at the time, we had the flexibility and our budget and our management team and the strength and our management team and data systems to engage in independent evaluation. We also weren't able to meet the demands that we had for a space in our programs, and so we had a ripe situation for doing a randomized controlled trial study.

Nonetheless, we've gotten pressure to do, you know, additional randomized control trial studies, which I find a tough pill to swallow. As a leader of a nonprofit, I think you have to be thoughtful about, well, when's the right time to do that? You know, you also don't want to have the reputation of you know, quote, "experimenting with families." You do the work to convince families to go through a lottery system, for example, to be part of the program. You knew you couldn't serve all those families anyway. So you say, "we're going to put you through a lottery as a way to assign you to program seats." You know, that's not an easy conversation. The rest of you are going to be assigned to a control group. Sorry. You're gonna have to figure out what else to do, but we're going to call you a control group. We're still going to ask you to submit a lot of data so we can understand what your experience was. That's just not a fun set of conversations for poor families that are desperate for programs, services, or interventions.

**Grace:** [00:20:42] Yeah. So, that's interesting because when you were describing it at first, I was thinking, uh, if I'm a donor and I'm really curious about the impact that the nonprofits that I give to are having wouldn't I always recommend an RCT then to them? You know, I know there's that process and sort of impact on the families component that you just described, but could you say more about why a nonprofit should, or shouldn't kind of undergo something so, so comprehensive, I mean, it sounds like a great thing. I'm sure it was really helpful for, for the fundraising, for instance, to actually have that really concrete data and evidence.

How would you advise donors to think about, you know, the relationship with nonprofits with regards to this kind of measurement?



**Tiffany:** [00:21:25] Yeah, it was helpful for fundraising and being able to, to say we have so much confidence this works, and our confidence is backed by this study that eliminates bias in a real rigorous way to the impact we're having.

It did help us fundraise, but I would say that's not the most important reason to do a study. You have to feel like you're going to learn something valuable. But I think, do you think an organization and a funder should look at the issue area and ask what evidence, generally speaking, do we have about the problem? About this model?

About what works? And not hold every organization accountable to doing a study and building evidence, but instead having a literature base. And so where the literature base is light or thin, like it was around summer learning, BELL was positioned to add to that. I think every summer learning providers should have to do their own RCT to demonstrate their chops?

No, I don't. I think they should rely on BELL's evidence that when you're structured this way, you can deliver this kind of impact. And then funders should ask what, to what extent are you lined up with, with what that study described was going on?

**Phil:** [00:22:28] That's so important, that the answer sometimes for a nonprofit is just to do something that has already been shown elsewhere, uh, to work and not have to demonstrate it all over again.

And, and then also to recognize that, well, RCTs have relevance for something that's trying to change someone's life trajectory, it doesn't have relevance if you're the children's museum and your goal is just to have a good experience for the people who visit the children's museum. So, to calibrate the measurement approach to the organization and the mission and the context, rather than doing what I think so many donors do, many do not, but so many do, which is to look for the one measurement approach, the analog to ROI, which there will never be.

But this leads me to something else I want to ask you about because part of the problem is the power dynamic here. And how does the nonprofit leader say, Oh, you know what, actually donor, no, you're not thinking about this the right way. And we had a conversation once, Tiffany, where I said something along the lines of, well, you know, you gotta push back, you gotta speak up.

I gave some examples of when I had been able to do that at CEP and I felt like it had worked well. And you essentially said, "well, that might have been, it's a lot easier for you maybe than it would be for me cause you're like a white guy and certain assumptions are made." And getting us back to the issue of race again, but also gender.

And I thought of that conversation when we just did a survey of grantees about their experience post-COVID with individual donors and foundation donors. And we looked at differences by the demographic characteristics of the nonprofit leaders who were responding to a survey about how their donors were or weren't helping them. And one of the things that came through as a major difference in experience was that women-led nonprofits we're much less likely to have had a conversation with individual donors, major



donors, who were supporting them, about sort of what the future holds, what the likely level of future support was then the male EDS were, in a time of crisis when that kind of information is so important because people need to know what's happening. So can you speak a little bit to how you've experienced those dynamics in your role fundraising?

**Tiffany:** [00:24:47] Yeah. It's really interesting. And I remember that conversation. I do think, Phil, you are able to push back on in, at the time you were also talking about how you were pushing back on, "no, I need, my, my overhead ratio has to be this. I got to support my staff and my benefits and my, this and my that." And no, I've, I've never as a female leader, as a leader of color, you know, the, both of them combined together, been able to push back on a, or felt like I could push back on a donor and say, "you're wrong, how you're thinking about that."

There's a definite and obvious power dynamic and how it plays out by race and gender, I think is beginning to be well-documented and well understood. And I'm glad that the CEP studies are contributing to that evidence base. It's not just perception, it's real. You know, we have now lots of evidence that nonprofits led by people of color have less proportionally, by a long shot, unrestricted capital. They also tend to be smaller in overall budget size, probably as a function of never being able to innovate and grow and experiment and test because they don't have unrestricted capital in the ways that would allow them to grow.

We know all of those things are happening. What have been my personal experiences with it? I often, when I was a nonprofit leader, felt like I lacked access to especially individual donors. At BellXCel, we were so good historically at raising money from foundations, because at least there, there was often a somewhat transparent process. Often if they had good practices and application process that was posted online and a timeline, and so we mastered that type of fundraising. Okay. We know what you're looking for. We know when the proposal is due. We can turn out that kind of response and that kind of report, and we raised almost all of our money there.

We had very little individual support. For most of our history, it came only through our board of directors. And growing even our board of directors required access to people. And the only way we, we grew our board of directors was through our board. But as a leader of color, I definitely felt like I could not access the kind of individuals or people that would grow my board. Or grow my individual giving base. It was very, very difficult. And it was only through the good fortune of the incredible board members that I did have that we did manage to get into some other networks. And we were able to raise individual funds through our galas, for example. But that was really the way in which people felt like, okay, I will give money if it wasn't in that case because they trust in me as the leader, or our work. It's because their friend asked them to sponsor a table or to make a gift to the gala. And so, I saw it all the time as leader of color.

**Phil:** [00:27:28] Can we flip this for a second? If you're an individual donor listening to this, and let's say you're a white guy, how do you avoid just falling into the networks where you might not be seeing the best organizations, because you're seeing the organizations that are connected to the people you went to school with. How do you break out? I mean, is it going

to your local community foundation and asking them for help? I'm trying to think of what we could tell donors to avoid doing so that they don't perpetuate this.

**Tiffany:** [00:28:02] I think once you commit to doing it differently or doing it better in that regard and you set some mile marker in your own mind about what that's gonna look like, then it'll change your behavior. So, for example, at Blue Meridian, we are committed to hiring only from diverse candidate pools. If a candidate pool is not diverse, we don't proceed with the hire. That, of course, does not mean all of our hires are diverse. We hired the best person from the pool every time, but we won't proceed with the pool unless the pool is diverse. And so that's a commitment we made. Until we made that, and until we said, well, we got to figure out what's it going to take to get a diverse pool, of course didn't have very diverse pools because you build from your network and the same usual suspects know about you and they apply first and you build your pool early and, and philanthropy is already very, very overwhelmingly white.

I would say that. I think if the individual donors listening today sort of say to themselves, 'I need more proximity to the issues. How am I going to get it?' If I take a meeting with three nonprofit leaders in a month, then maybe I say, I'm going to do six and three of them have to be leaders that are atypical for me. They have to be women or three of them have to be people of color...at least. Or if I feel like, no, I can't double the number of meetings I have. I can only take three. Guess what? You say no more often to the typical ones who've been taking and you say, no, I really made this commitment to myself. If I'm only gonna do three meetings, they really need to be a diverse set of people I take and hear the pitch. Because that's where it's happening. They're getting inspired by the people that happen to get their ear. And there are so many inspiring stories and opportunities out there. You just got to get close enough to hear them.

**Grace:** [00:29:47] So if I'm to sum up, I mean, I think we've touched on many aspects of what it takes to be a good donor. I think what you just described of getting proximate to not the usual suspects of the same kind of sort of networks and circles that a donor may run in, don't restrict funding was another one, don't impose measures of impact that don't make sense. What else would you add to that list?

**Tiffany:** [00:30:11] When I was running a nonprofit, I really wished for the opportunity to get to know donors more so that I could benefit from more than just their capital. I was always eager to learn as a nonprofit leader and understood that to have the greatest possible impact, I couldn't possibly already know what to do. Otherwise I would have done it! Like, I need to be hearing from and exploring and experimenting and continuously learning all the time.

And so if my donor group could be part of that learning, you know, through accessibility? That just creates so much value. I think nonprofit leaders are interested in it and want it.

**Grace:** [00:30:47] To end, we ask all of our guests the same question. And that question is: giving done right to you is about fill in the blank.

**Tiffany:** [00:30:57] To me, giving done right is about feedback and responsiveness.

**Grace:** [00:31:04] On the part of?

**Tiffany:** [00:31:05] ...on the part of all parties involved. I think giving done right is about supporting the work of nonprofit fits in leaders in a way that is, is responsive to what you're hearing from them. And I think delivering impact it's about being responsive to what is going on in the communities or the people you're trying to serve. And so, when giving is done right, it's listening and it's being responsive.

**Grace:** [00:31:31] Thank you so much, Tiffany. This has been a great conversation. Thanks for being with us.

**Tiffany:** [00:31:35] It's been a pleasure, Phil & Grace.

**Phil:** [00:31:37] Thank you, Tiffany.

[music]

**Grace:** [00:31:44] So Phil, I'm curious to hear your reflections on our conversation with Tiffany.

**Phil:** [00:31:48] I just think there's so much wisdom in what Tiffany had to offer and that wisdom is, you know, born out of her experience on both sides of the funder-nonprofit table. And we often talk, Grace, you've heard me say how there's no analog people say, 'Oh, we're the funder. I'm the donor. And the grantees are like our customer. The nonprofits are like our customer.' No, they're not because the money's flowing in the opposite direction. The power dynamics are completely different. I can go to a restaurant, have bad meal. I can trash them online. I never have to go there again. You're on the wrong end of a bad dynamic with a funder, but you need that funding -- you don't have that kind of voice or power. So Tiffany talked to us about how those dynamics play out and what it is nonprofits really need and what it is that donors can provide. So I just think there was a lot there in terms of unrestricted support, thoughtful approaches to measurement, being aware of the gender and race dynamics. I just thought there were a lot of great, very practical takeaways for our audience today. How about you, Grace?

**Grace:** [00:32:55] I think the overall takeaway that I have is that, you know, giving well, really is you know, a science. It's a practice that has to be cultivated. You know, when she was describing all the different kinds of assessments on impact that a nonprofit could pursue, it just occurred to me that some donors may think that they are you know, just trying to do the best they can, and then they kind of dip their toe into philanthropy and realize, wow, there's actually so much context here, so much to learn, so much to listen and understand, and I feel a little overwhelming, I think. Obviously, that's why there are folks to help along the way. But I think that was a really interesting takeaway for me is that she really has devoted her life to creating impact for kids and other needy populations in this very strategic and evidence-based approach.

I have to say I was also really struck by just her personal story of that playground interaction. Similar to her, my earliest kind of remembering of sort of being very conscious of being different racially was also on a playground probably in second or third grade. And so I really

resonate with that feeling. And that seed that was planted in her has really led her to pursue such an amazing career path and such amazing ways of giving back, um, which I find incredibly inspiring.

**Phil:** [00:34:18] Yeah. It's so powerful and a tough reminder of the realities... I'm reading Isabel Wilkerson's *Caste* right now, and I couldn't help, but think of that book when Tiffany told her story or, or when you describe yours and, you know, we're so lucky that Tiffany took from that experience a desire to devote her incredible talents to the effort of making our society one in which that kind of thing doesn't happen anymore. And in which, you know, what neighborhood you grow up in does not predict your life outcomes or where race does not predict your life outcome. So, she is one of the great leaders in philanthropy, and I'm honored that she spent time with us and that she serves on the CEP board.

**Grace:** [00:35:08] So Phil, where can people go for more information about effective giving?

**Phil:** [00:35:12] Definitely go to our website, of course, [cep.org](http://cep.org). They can also go to our podcast site, uh, [givingdoneright.org](http://givingdoneright.org) for all our podcast episodes and show notes.

**Grace:** [00:35:24] I also want to mention your book *Giving Done Right*, which came out last year. It's a tremendous resource for donors who are seeking to do good.

**Phil:** [00:35:30] Thanks, Grace. And you of course are on Twitter @GraceNicolette. I'm there as well @PhilxBuchanan. You can send us emails, too. We love to get notes -- what you liked, what you didn't like, what you'd like to see on future episodes. Our email is [GDRpodcast@cep.org](mailto:GDRpodcast@cep.org).

**Grace:** [00:35:49] And if you like the show, please do leave us a review on Apple Podcasts. It really helps.

**Phil:** [00:35:54] Huge thanks, again, to Tiffany for joining us. Thanks to the CEP podcast team: the amazing Sarah Martin, who's our producer, research and logistics guru Molly Heidemann, and our terrific colleagues, Ethan McCoy, Jay Kustka, and Sae Darling. Thanks for joining us today.