



## **Philanthropy: We're all in it Together**

Small Business Saturday is a day to throw our support behind our local businesses and to recognize the unique contribution of small business to our quality of life and to the economy. At the Center for Nonprofit Leadership, in addition to recognizing that most local nonprofits are themselves small businesses, we recognize the outsize impact of this community's small for-profit businesses on our community health.

As of 2018, the SBA estimates there are 30.2 million small businesses employing a total of 58.9 million workers, and those small businesses are responsible for approximately 44% of economic activity nationwide. These companies are continually being squeezed by bigger players, who have assumed a greater share of economic activity in recent years, particularly during recent lock-downs.

Small businesses are even more important on the local level. The vast majority of Nevada County businesses, including not-for-profits, are classified as "small" using the SBA's definitions. There are a variety of benefits to having a thriving local business community. First, local businesses provide employment opportunities to local workers, including workers who might struggle to find opportunity with larger employers. This helps to ensure that we have the talent and money in our community to continue to have excellent access to goods and quality services. Second, small businesses can adapt more easily to meet unique community needs. This includes everything from carrying the most needed products to adapting to a crisis by providing food for firefighters or vaccines in a pandemic. Third, locally owned businesses bring sales and property tax funds in the community where they support local schools and government activities. Finally, dollars earned in local businesses are far more likely to be spent or invested in the community as well.

Local businesses, which are predominately small businesses also have an important symbiotic relationship with the philanthropic community. Both philanthropic and for-profit businesses contribute to making the community safer, healthier, and more pleasant. For-profit business relies on not-for-profits to help address the needs of community members to improve the quality of life and business environment. Philanthropic organizations rely on local business to provide services, funding, in-kind donations, and volunteer services.

It would be impossible to quantify the value of support from the local for-profit community to the philanthropic community in Nevada County. While many of us see local business names proudly displayed as event sponsors, that is the tip of the proverbial iceberg. Small businesses provide free and low-cost professional services from tax preparation to legal advice to construction services. They provide in kind donations of food, wine, and raffle items. Some offer opportunities to partner with nonprofits in staffing volunteer events. And many act as ambassadors for philanthropic organizations finding ways to increase giving among customers and staff. Beyond that, many are involved in direct service to individual community members.

We encourage of all you to shop locally first as we enter this holiday season. And today, and all days, we celebrate our small business community and offer our deepest gratitude for all of the ways that our local businesses allow our philanthropic organizations to grow and thrive.

**Publish Date, Nov. 27th**