



**BETTY AND DAVIS
FITZGERALD**
FOUNDATION

LEADERSHIP PROFILE

Executive Director

Betty and Davis Fitzgerald Foundation

Atlanta, GA

"Working to create opportunities in Georgia."

The Opportunity

The [Betty and Davis Fitzgerald Foundation](#) is an impactful family foundation whose influence reaches well beyond the financial distributions of its \$35M corpus. It is regarded as a collaborative, responsive organization that leads with humility and purpose.

As the founding Executive Director plans for retirement, the Board seeks a thoughtful, innovative, engaged community leader to steward the Foundation's assets and continue the legacy of collaborative, influential and responsive giving in Metro Atlanta and Georgia.

The Foundation's mission is to honor Betty and Davis Fitzgerald by making a difference in the lives of others, primarily through education and health care opportunities. Betty and Davis Fitzgerald were a kind, humorous, thrifty couple who cared deeply for Atlanta. Betty graduated from Duke University and began working in Atlanta in 1948. Davis was a Georgia Tech grad and worked at Trust Company, now Truist. Their estate, now the Betty and Davis Fitzgerald Foundation, is their gift back to their community.

The Foundation is nimble and responsive to the community's urgent needs and its peer philanthropic partners. They are thoughtful and not afraid to act quickly if needed. As the Executive Director stated, "We need to be bold. If we see the world is tilted, we need to tilt too."

As the Foundation embarks on its first leadership transition, the new Executive Director will inherit a well-run organization, with an engaged Board and an opportunity to impact philanthropy in Metro Atlanta and Georgia in new and innovative ways. While the focus on education and healthcare will remain, the Board is interested in continuous learning, the intersectionality of issues, impact investing and a continued push towards racial equity. The next Executive Director will be a

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*Automotive Training Center,
Fitzgerald Foundation grantee*

thought leader able to lead and inform the Board on new and innovative ways to address systemic issues, while maintaining excellent operations and grant management.

The Organization

The Foundation's giving is centered in three areas: mental health, student success, and employment success. Funding is balanced between direct service and policy. Policy work focuses on moving "upstream" to address systemic issues.

In 2007, the Foundation began its work in mental health, responding to the needs of Grady Hospital to renovate the ward and to fund mental health triage in the emergency room. It was the first foundation to visit the Grady Mental Health Ward and as a result, gave \$1mm, one of its largest single grants, to fund mental health triage in the emergency room.

After developing a strategic plan, the Foundation determined \$1mm grants would not be the norm. Jackie Stradley, the Founding ED, reached out to three other foundation directors to determine how they could collaborate to fund the area's significant mental health needs. She continued to reach out to others and the group eventually grew to 32. It became the Mental Health Grantmakers collaborative which Stradley ran for five years, pooling the expertise and resources of multiple foundations. Members of this group started Resilient Georgia in 2019, a state-wide public, private coalition focused on creating an integrated behavioral health system.

Similarly, when the COVID crisis began in March of 2020, the Fitzgerald Foundation responded immediately, increased its giving to 6% of the asset base, called existing grantees, determined the greatest areas of need, and pushed out \$700,000 in six weeks to grantees and Georgia's food banks and community foundation emergency funds.



Gateway Center, Fitzgerald Foundation grantee

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The disproportionate impact of COVID on black and brown communities, as well as the murder of George Floyd was a “wake up call,” spurring the Foundation to expand their efforts to focus on racial justice as a means of driving racial equity. The Fitzgerald Foundation was the first foundation to give to the United Way Racial Equity and Healing Fund. They also became intentional in funding organizations whose leadership, staff, Board and clients were proximate to equity needs.

The family has thoughtfully built the foundation from the ground up, establishing and fine tuning procedures, always striving for philanthropic best practice. It is governed by a Board of twelve, including eight family members and four non-family members. The daily operations are run by an Executive Director and a Grantmaking Associate. The Board and Executive Director are conscientious stewards of the \$35mm corpus. Annual grants typically total \$1mm. The Board increased this to \$1.5mm in the last two years to be responsive to increased community needs. They will evaluate if this increased giving will continue for the next year.

The Foundation is guided by the following values:

- We believe racial justice drives racial equity.
- We strive for humility, respect and compassion in our work.
- We operate with integrity and honesty.
- We are committed to equity, diversity and inclusion.
- We are stewards of the resources left by Betty and Davis.
- We strive to meet today’s needs and opportunities while seeking to address tomorrow’s challenges.



Ser Familia, Fitzgerald Foundation grantee

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We are serious regarding best practices and internal controls. We do not cut corners. We do not fudge on anything.

The Board is active, engaged, collegial, and enjoy working together. The by-laws call for two-thirds family members and one-third non-family. A new generation of family Board members has joined in the last three years. The Board is comprised of accomplished national and international business and nonprofit leaders.

Every Board member is required to join one of the three Focus Committees: Mental Health, Student Success and Employment Success, and make two grantee site visits a year. This has been modified the last two years due to COVID. Board members are also responsible for absorbing the detailed, fact-based information from the Executive Director provided on a regular basis to help them understand the needs of the community and the options available to help.

The Foundation has a high standard of excellence in operations. The current Executive Director has handled financial controls up until the last three months. She stated, “We are serious regarding best practices and internal controls. We do not cut corners. We do not fudge on anything.” As they prepare for a new Executive Director, they have engaged [MS Tiller](#) to provide accounting and audit service. The Foundation’s investment management is provided by [Crewcial Partners](#).

The Responsibilities

The Executive Director’s responsibilities will focus on four key areas:

Mission:

- Facilitate Board discussion of mission and strategies for accomplishing the mission. Such work includes learning about, doing personal homework in, and discussing with the Board all that’s become apparent about Racial Equity and the responsibility of philanthropy to change.

- Participate in grantmaking conferences and events to learn the needs of the community and how to collaborate with other grant makers
- Represent the Foundation in talking with grant seeking organizations by listening to them with respect and offering advice where appropriate
- Seek opportunities for the Foundation's grants to make a difference for the grant seeking organization
- Pursue continuous learning about grantmaking and assist the Board in the same

Grantmaking:

- Represent the Foundation in all aspects of grant making including research and responding to inquiries with respect
- Help the Focus Committees create a strategy for grantmaking and site visits and recruit grantees to apply as appropriate
- Execute grant agreements and manage the award of grants approved by the Board
- Follow up and report to the Board on the performance of grants

Fiduciary Management:

- Adhere to the internal controls for the Foundation
- Monitor and report on asset investment and file all necessary government reports and pay all necessary taxes
- Provide information for the Foundation's annual audit
- Provide financial reports to the Board
- Budget, manage and report on the expenses of the Foundation



*Scholarship Academy,
Fitzgerald Foundation grantee*

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The Executive Director's responsibilities will focus on four key areas: Mission, Grantmaking, Fiduciary Management and Governance.



*Automotive Training Center,
Fitzgerald Foundation grantee*

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The ideal candidate will be a collaborative, humble thought leader with a passion for the community, an understanding of non-profits, and a dedication to philanthropy.

Governance:

- Keep the Board aware of strategic opportunities and maintain the rhythm of the grantmaking process
- Provide written reports to the Board on status and issues relating to grantmaking, fiduciary management and governance
- Assist with recruiting and onboarding new Board members
- Participate in the grantmaking leadership of Atlanta as appropriate to understand strategic opportunities relative to the Foundation’s mission and to seek best practices in grantmaking
- Budget, manage and report on the matching gifts paid by the Foundation on donations of Board members
- Maintain all internal financial information and payments

The Candidate

The ideal candidate will be a collaborative, humble thought leader with a passion for the community, an understanding of non-profits, and a dedication to philanthropy. Individual assets include:

- Integrity, trustworthiness and transparency
- Ability to see grantees and those they serve as equals
- Demonstrated track record of solid judgment, and analytical ability
- Intelligent, reflective and mature, not prone to self-promotion
- Deep understanding of the drivers of inequity

- Motivated self-starter willing to tackle the full array of activities common to a leanly staffed office
- Continuous learner who balances big picture thinking with attention to detail
- Exceptional listener and communicator who invites confidence, assimilates diverse viewpoints, and knows how to create consensus
- Servant leader adept at developing trusted relationships across a wide spectrum of peers, stakeholders and grantees
- Poised, considerate, authentic and reliable
- Takes pride in important work done well

The Relationships

The Executive Director reports to	The Betty and Davis Fitzgerald Foundation Board of Directors.
And works closely with	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer leaders and staff in other foundations and philanthropic networks across Fitzgerald's footprint of service • Subject-matter experts in areas of special interest to Fitzgerald • Nonprofit leaders, especially those heading current and potential Fitzgerald grantees

The Location

The office is currently located on Northside Parkway in Atlanta, Georgia.

For potential consideration
or to recommend a prospect,
please email appropriate materials to
FitzgeraldFoundation@BoardWalkConsulting.com
or call **Crystal Stephens** or
Diane Westmore at 404-262-7392.