Starting Seeds: We Reap What We Sow

Ever notice how the sudden appearance of a sunny day in March gives you new perspective?

In Ohio, we had a few spring-like days recently, and I spoke with many people who felt more positive and better about the future. I think we all needed those rays of sunshine! It also means it’s time to start dreaming of delicious leafy greens, heirloom tomatoes fresh off the vine, and more zucchini bread than any one human should eat. So last night, a friend and I finished our second set of hundreds of seed starts for four families’ gardens this year. Our first sets have sprouted, and even during a brief snow squall this morning the greenhouse was a haven of warmth, nurturing, and growth for our baby herbs and veggies. That little greenhouse is a thing of beauty.

I find the rhythm of the seed-to-harvest process personally and spiritually fulfilling. I know every seed we plant or garden bed I till will lead to more food on our shelves this fall, lower grocery bills this winter, and a lighter footprint upon the Earth. The time we invest and those seeds—so small and fragile but full of amazing potential now—will sustain us.

There are similarities in our working lives. There are new grant writers among us who are fragile in their own way (having not yet been buffeted around by the world of grants) but full of potential. I feel it’s my duty as an experienced professional to cultivate talented writers who are passionate about nonprofits. So I joined the Grant Professionals Foundation (GPF), which exists to be the gentle gardener of these precious seeds. But what does the GPF do?

Of course, the purpose of a foundation is obvious to us as grant writers and is well-stated on the website. The GPF exists to strengthen grant writers and support its partners the GPA and GPCI. But the GPF is so much more than that. Its membership and chapter scholarships are the seeds we plant to sustain our profession and nonprofits over the long-term. Conference scholarships allow grant writers to cultivate new connections and relationships that support stronger roots. GPC exam scholarships encourage a deeper immersion into our profession while helping individual grant writers gain more self-confidence.

We reap what we sow, and I for one am glad the GPF and its partners the GPA and GPCI are here to help us till the soil. Building stronger grant writers ultimately results in more robust nonprofits and healthier communities. It takes time and a nurturing heart, but it’s worth it: that’s the better world I want to leave to my children.

What will you reap?