

THE BCF EDGE

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Conversation WITH TOM WILCOX

A SERIES OF CONVERSATIONS WITH PHILANTHROPIC PARTNERS AND OTHERS

PATRICK MCCARTHY

Patrick McCarthy is president of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, and a newly-elected BCF trustee. The following is excerpted from a March 2011 conversation between Patrick McCarthy and BCF President and CEO Tom Wilcox.

Tom Wilcox (TW): I'm welcoming Patrick McCarthy, the new President of the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Patrick will be joining the BCF board, and we're thrilled to have you as part of this BCF family.

Patrick, in your capacity as a long term Casey Foundation insider and now as its leader, what is your sense of the Casey Foundation overall and its relationship with Baltimore?

Patrick McCarthy (PM): Well first, Tom, thanks for inviting me over here for this talk; it really is quite an honor to be invited to join the board. The Casey Foundation is the largest foundation in the country that focuses on issues of disadvantaged kids...and we think there are three big areas that you'd have to attack if you were very serious about improving outcomes for kids. Number one, we know that one of the biggest drivers of bad outcomes for kids is poverty. So a big chunk of what we do focuses on a two generation strategy: to put kids on a path towards success, their

parents have to be on a path towards economic success.

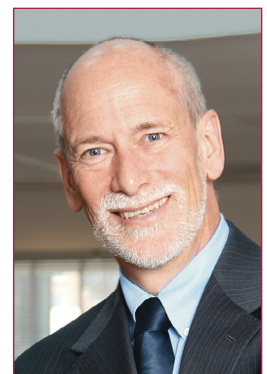
But we also know that lots of kids grow up poor and they do fine, and the reason that they do fine is that they have strong families. So the second area we focus on is trying to make sure that every child is connected to a strong family for life.

The third thing we know is that where you grow up makes a huge difference. So we try to help neighborhoods become good places to raise kids, and that means everything from good transportation, connecting folks to jobs, neighborhood amenities like parks and clean streets, safety, good schools, and it means that sense of social cohesion that a healthy community has. So across the country, but particularly in Baltimore, we're working in areas where communities need a whole lot of physical redevelopment, and social capital building, etc. in order to become places to raise kids.

And finally...we are all about scale, we want to see improvements in outcomes not just for kids participating in one program, but for whole populations—that is all the kids in the neighborhood, all the kids in the city, all the kids in the country.

Baltimore is a terrific place for us to work around all of those ideas...a city that clearly had been through some tough times but has a history of persevering through those tough times, a place where

the notion that physical redevelopment wasn't enough, that you had to also look at building social capital, a city that cared about families and cared about neighborhoods.



Patrick McCarthy

TW: You've supported us in a variety of ways—why does a major national foundation partner with a local community foundation?

PM: Community foundations and Baltimore Community Foundation in particular have the opportunity to inspire hundreds of donors towards a common civic agenda. The Baltimore Community Foundation...recognizes that you're going to be a lot more powerful if you can harness all these different interests around a set of common themes where people can invest. Then in this way, the results will become more influential than just the dollars. So for us...to have a partner in Baltimore that has that kind of thinking and that is able to pull in *continued on back*

a range of donors that then becomes a voice, makes this a terrific partnership.

TW: Can we help each other as we work locally and you look nationally?

PM: This is a great question. Although we do have the national lens we have tried increasingly over the last ten years to also have a local lens. When we're part of a national group we're not just a funder, we're not just a national funder, we bring the experience that we've had on the ground in local areas. Part of that experience is our work with the Baltimore Community Foundation.

TW: Do you agree that that we can make a business case for investing in disadvantaged children, that we can create a significant return on philanthropic investment to enhance the business environment and reduce government expenditures even as we change lives?

PM: It's so clear...[Our board members, our UPS executives] are hardnosed business folks and they are guiding our work from the standpoint of how are we going to be globally competitive, how are we going to take this country into the next generation of success. We [Americans] are very prag-

matic people and we've been successful in the past at solving these kinds of problems with a sense of shared sacrifice, shared commitment. We've got to find that again.

TW: As you join our board, what are your hopes for Baltimore and for the Baltimore Community Foundation?

PM: I think there's nothing but opportunity in front of us.

TW: That's a fabulous way to wrap up, thank you very much.