

A Giant Impact: A Case Study on the Community Development and  
Unification Practices of the San Francisco Giants Community Fund

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ABSTRACT

A GIANT IMPACT: A CASE STUDY ON THE  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND UNIFICATION PRACTICES  
OF THE SAN FRANCISCO GIANTS COMMUNITY FUND

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Over the past two centuries, the considerable efforts of a number of organizations, companies, and individuals have led to the concurrent growth of two powerful industries: professional sport and community development. The last few decades have seen a merging of these two realms which effectively combine their separate spheres of influence to create a significant platform for societal change. The purpose of this study was to examine the community development and unification practices employed by the San Francisco Giants Community Fund. The researcher designed a case study examining the programs and events, partnerships and sponsorship, and marketing and fundraising practices utilized by the Giants Community Fund. The results indicate that the Giants are exemplary agents of community development but need to improve their marketing techniques. As an important member of their greater communities, all professional sport teams should utilize their unique platforms to support philanthropic initiatives and achieve positive change in their communities.

Keywords: professional sport, community development, sport philanthropy, San Francisco Giants, corporate social responsibility, Junior Giants

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## Chapter 1

### INTRODUCTION AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### Background of Study

Helen Keller once said, “Alone, we can do so little; together, we can do so much” (Adams, 2018, para. 1). It is no secret that one of humankind’s most powerful and innate gifts is the ability to help other people. Since the beginning of society, it has been proven time and time again that more can be accomplished by groups than by an individual. This lesson has become ingrained in everyday life with common adages such as “strength in numbers” or “love thy neighbor.” While the idea of “philanthropia” technically originates from the Ancient Greeks, meaning “to love people” (Philanthropy New York, 2008), the concept of formal philanthropy did not arise until the 1860s with the actions of financier George Peabody. Through the endowment of libraries and museums and funding housing communities for the poor, Peabody began a trend that would grow into one of the most impactful movements worldwide (Barbic, 2019). What started out as a somewhat disorganized undertaking was quickly industrialized and shaped into modern grantmaking, large-scale donations, and formal organizations devoted to the furthering of philanthropy. Various wars and historical tragedies gave birth to the Red Cross, the Peace Corps, and other such organizations, as well as tangential developments including small-scale charities and community funds (Philanthropy New York).

Today, it is common, if not expected, to find some form of a philanthropic arm in most businesses, organizations, and even sport teams. Anyone who has participated in a youth league or attended a live sporting event can attest to the incredible influence that

sport can have. From a business standpoint, the power of the sport market is immense, with a current estimated value of \$75.71 billion, a figure that is predicted to continue growing (Price Waterhouse Cooper, 2019). With such societal presence comes a huge platform and concomitant opportunity to achieve great change, particularly at a community level. The purpose of this study was to examine the community development and unification practices employed by the San Francisco Giants Community Fund.

### Review of Literature

Research for this review of literature was conducted at a home residence in Monterey, California due to the Shelter-in-Place order put into effect by California Polytechnic State University of San Luis Obispo in early March of 2020. In addition to online articles and other resources, the following online databases were utilized: *SPORTDiscus*, *Business Source Premier*, and *Sociological Abstracts*. This review of literature includes the following subsections: the evolution of structured community development in the United States, the modern definitions and understanding of community development, the introduction of community development into the corporate world, the role of corporate social responsibility in professional sport, and the unique relationships between community development and the professional sport industry.

Looking back on the inception and growth of community development in North America, it was a slow process composed of the big dreams and small actions of numerous individuals and organizations. Some trace the conceptual idea of community development as far back as Jamestown, Virginia, with its inherent value of self-help and dependency on local resources (Phifer, 1990). While its foundational roots may be found

in the pre-colonial era, the first clear evidence of community development began as a response to the escalating farm crisis of the late 19th century (Phifer). In 1908, President Theodore Roosevelt's Country Life Commission combined with the Country Life Movement in prompting the U.S. Department of Agriculture and land grant colleges to focus their resources on actively improving rural life (Summers, 1986). Their recommendations included one of the earliest mentions of "extension service," a term which, along with "extension agents" and "community organization work," ultimately grew into what is now referred to as community development. In response to these requests, the Smith Lever Act of 1914 established the Cooperative Extension Service as a joint endeavor of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and state land-grant colleges with matching federal and state funding (Phifer). This new service aimed to equip every farming county with at least one "trained demonstrator or itinerant teacher" to provide leadership and guidance in all manners of rural activity, including social, economic, and financial.

The passage of the Smith Lever Act launched a sort of organizational transformation as several states, including Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, New York, North Carolina, West Virginia and Virginia, began conducting "community organization work" under the leadership of their Extension Service (Phifer, 1990). In the early 1920s, extension agents began organizing community clubs in some Southern states and by 1923 more than 21,000 communities had a committee or club working on local improvements (True, 1928). Around the same time, educational associations such as the Adult Education Association and the National University Education Association (NUEA) began showing support. Since the term "community development" first appeared in their

1924 proceedings, the NUEA has played a major role in furthering the community development movement within universities (True). During the 1940s, NUEA leaders Howard McClusky, Jess Ogden, and Baker Brownwell launched community development programs, centers, and fields of study at their respective universities (Phifer). Over the next several years, this trend spread to other universities, towns, and cities as more and more establishments became aware of the benefits of community development programs.

The 1960s is widely considered to be one of the most influential decades for community development, particularly in terms of citizen participation and federal involvement (Phifer, 1990). In 1962, the Department of Community Development was established on Columbia's campus as a center for formal study and implementation of community development. Within a few years, the Area Redevelopment Administration was founded as one of the first of many federal programs that would offer financial incentives for community development. In 1964, federal impact continued when President Johnson declared his War on Poverty and began creating community action agencies which were funded through the Office of Economic Opportunity. By the mid-1960s, there were more than 1,100 federal programs offering technical and financial assistance for community improvement projects. This flood of programs providing funds for local, regional, state, and multi-state development persisted through the 60s and into the 1970s (Phifer). Universities continued their support as well, and by 1976 more than sixty-three colleges and universities offered programs and majors of study in community development (Cary, 1976).

In January of 1969, the NUEA made possibly its greatest contribution to community development through sponsoring a mid-continent conference that spurred the founding of the Community Development Society (CDS) in Columbia, Missouri. With membership fluctuating between 400 and 1,000 members, the CDS can be viewed as the first organization devoted solely to practitioners, teachers, and agents of community development (Phifer, 1990). This establishment marked a symbolic dedication to appreciating and integrating community development as a fundamental element in the corporate, residential, and social worlds.

Jumping ahead to the current decade, community development is no longer an embryonic idea or far-fetched vision but rather a commonplace term which holds the value and appreciation of those involved with and affected by it. However, given its dynamic nature and wide range of manifestations, it remains difficult to define. One definition describes community development as:

A process aimed at promoting citizen participation in social affairs, developing people's awareness of problems, enabling them to define their needs in relation to the total environment, make possible their enlightened choice among various options and channel the results into effective action for social changes. (Draper, 1971, p. 383)

On a federal relationship level, community development can be viewed as, "a process which emphasizes the organization of people to act as citizens to cause changes, to communicate with the established power, and to make them listen" (Chekki, 1982, p. 32).

While the specific goals of any given community development program will vary depending on their respective area or organization, almost all seem to fall under the

collective theory that they are, “Intended to raise individual and group aspirations, develop indigenous leadership, create a sense of neighborliness, allow people to learn new skills, and teach people to make use of government services in a more meaningful and creative way” (Brokenshaw & Hodge, 1969, p. 121). With its more humanistic goals, some see community development as an effective solution to the shortcomings of typical bureaucratic organizations. They have certainly proven capable of accomplishing great feats of human power, including reduction of alienation and hopelessness, focus on locally relevant needs and issues, and immeasurable unification of community members (Chekki).

There is a diverse collection of programs that fall under the broad label of community development, ranging from citizen-led councils to state regional planning commissions to governmental units. Community development entered the corporate world under the name of corporate social responsibility (CSR), which has been described as “the extent to which an organization meets the needs, expectations, and demands of certain external constituencies beyond those directly linked to the company’s products and markets” (Ullmann, 1985, p. 548). This introduced the associated concepts of company-society relationships and societal expectations’ role in a company’s conduct. McWilliams and Siegel (2000) defined CSR as “a set of actions aimed to further some social good, beyond the explicit pecuniary interests of the firm, that are not required by law” (p. 156). This new set of actions included cause-related marketing and cause branding as part of the transition from a focus on financial-social performance relationships to the context, processes, and outcomes of CSR. Cause-related marketing is characterized as “profit-motivated giving... enables firms to contribute to nonprofit

organizations while also increasing their bottom line by tying those contributions to sales” (Grau & Folse, 2007, p. 26). Beyond moral fortitude, CSR introduced a new opportunity for competitive advantage and intra-company strength. Engaging in CSR activities can produce intangible benefits including reputational capital, improved employee commitment, and a buffer for negative media scrutiny (Alsop, 2002).

With the emergence of corporate social responsibility came the concept of strategic philanthropy or the “synergistic use of a firm’s resources to achieve both organizational and social benefits” (Bradish & Cronin, 2009, p.692 ). Serving as an alternative to viewing philanthropy as a solely altruistic undertaking, strategic philanthropy was founded on the idea that philanthropic activities can provide the organization with a benefit to themselves and their brand in addition to the social benefits for the causes they support. These company benefits may be financial, political, or social and all indicate a motivation beyond just the “warm feelings” associated with prosocial behavior. Instead, the actions are driven by self-serving motives with an underlying goal of gaining something in exchange for their charitable activity.

As corporate social responsibility and philanthropy became increasingly prevalent in the corporate world, the professional sport industry was not exempt from its influence. Given their heightened media exposure, amplified reach of athletes, and deep-rooted role in the community, it was logical for professional sport organizations (PSOs) to focus on social responsibility and adopting philanthropic practices. From a business standpoint, there is an undeniable advantage to developing and maintaining good relationships with the communities in which they operate (Babiak et al., 2012). Armev (2004) acknowledges that PSO executives are becoming increasingly concerned with the image

and public perception of their teams. According to Carroll (1999), the motivation for PSOs to engage in sport philanthropy should not be reputational but rather the “moral and discretionary responsibilities for contributing their resources to the community” (p. 277). This supports the idea that the greater social significance of these activities lies in the belief that PSOs can effectively facilitate the achievement of the social objectives of their nonprofit partners (Diehl, 2007). By utilizing cause-related sport marketing, partnerships with charitable causes, and community outreach, PSOs can express their commitment to CSR via cause-based sport events, drives, and other acts of civic engagement (Babiak & Wolfe, 2009). The athletes of these PSOs are valuable resources for facilitating social impact and building positive associations for themselves and their teams. Overall, professional sport leagues, corporations, and teams can be regarded as influential agents in both economic and cultural realms (Kern, 2000).

Although roughly twenty years ago corporate social responsibility did not play a significant role in professional sport, today nearly all professional sport teams have established community development programs or charitable foundations (Babiak et al., 2012). Particularly over the past decade, PSOs have increasingly focused on social responsibility and engaged in philanthropic activities designed to support social causes (Babiak & Wolfe, 2009; Diehl, 2007). The “Sports Philanthropy Project” was founded in 1998 with the mission of “harnessing the power of professional sports to support the development of healthy communities” (Diehl). This organization grew to support over four hundred philanthropic organizations associated with athlete charities, league initiatives, and team foundations. On an international level, the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) became one of the first sport organizations to create an

‘internal corporate social responsibility unit’ and committed a percentage of their revenues to related CSR programs (Hassanian-Moghaddam et al., 2018). Across America and the world, sporting events grew into agents that could achieve community objectives and support the progress and growth of a community. Other modern examples include the NHL’s “Hockey Fights Cancer” program and the NBA’s “Read to Achieve” and “Basketball Without Borders” initiatives.

In examining the motivations behind *why* the sport industry saw this spike in community development behavior, it is evident that the range of motivations are complex and varying between organizations and individuals. An overarching theme is that engagement in philanthropy leads to beneficial outcomes whether they are self-serving or purely altruistic. Athletes have shared experiences of satisfaction, feelings of helping, and being engaged in their community (Babiak et al., 2012). This humanitarian mindset is exemplified by William Ford, former president of the Detroit Lions, who shared, “The Lions are not just a football team but a part of the community as well. We have a unique opportunity and responsibility to help make a difference by being a good corporate citizen” (Inoue, Mahan III, & Kent, 2013, p. 320). On the other hand, Hibbert and Horne (1996) found alternative motivations for charitable acts, including career advancement, public recognition, and enhanced social status. Other self-serving aims can even be tangible such as tax relief or public rewards. Whatever the reasons may be, it is agreed upon that forming a foundation legitimizes the associated organization, team, or player as a genuine, philanthropic community member.

In addition to the motivating factors that prompted the sport philanthropy movement, several aspects of the professional sport industry make it an ideal platform for

launching community action. Sport is “unique for being both a social and an economic institution, and as such, well-suited with this dual orientation to be interpreted by the business principles and practices of corporate social responsibility” (Smith & Westerbeek, 2007, p. 49). The factors that are distinct to the realm of professional sport include its economic power, necessity of stakeholder management, transparency, and potential for passion. Noll (2003) describes sports leagues as possessing “close to monopoly power,” noting the special protections that they receive from the government. Babiak and Wolfe (2009) point out that sport leagues often receive public funding for stadium construction and other infrastructure. A PSO’s operation is dependent upon a village of outside organizations including the media, sponsors, and fans, each of which is invested in the potential benefits of the team’s CSR activities (Wallace, 2004). Sport and philanthropy also play a significant role in the cultural makeup of society as sport is inherently about aspiration and achievement, which therefore makes it a source of inspiration to fans and followers. The dedication, passion, and discipline required by professional athletes translates to an opportunity to motivate others to make a difference in causes that are important to them (Babiak et al., 2012).

The sport industry is further characterized by the continuous transparency that is expected from every member of a PSO both within and outside the game context. Everything from season statistics and leadership strategies to charity donations and athletes’ families is considered open knowledge (Armey, 2004). With this, a PSO’s actions off the field (or court) are equally as impactful as their success or failure in competition when it comes to reputation and public opinion. In comparison, organizations and groups in other industries do not face the same level of media analysis

or general knowledge of their employees' behaviors. Because of this scrutiny, PSOs must be careful and intentional about how their activities are marketed and communicated to the stakeholders and the public (Walker, Kent, & Vincent, 2010). According to Du, Bhattacharya, and Se (2010), a consumer's evaluations of a PSO may vary based on how its philanthropic activities are described and how the information is disseminated.

Lastly, the professional sport industry carries a special element of passion that cannot be found in other corporate realms. Thousands of people will rally behind a certain team or even an individual player and develop an attachment. This connection and admiration in turn enables that team or player to dramatically affect their consumers' views and behavior. The concept of team identification, which can stem from familial association or even physical proximity, introduces a sub-community that will follow the actions of its chosen leader. Athletes today have an almost celebrity-like status in which their conduct in all areas of their life are closely watched and often imitated. With this increased attention comes a set of expectations regarding their demonstration of charitable involvement (Roy & Graeff, 2003) as well as the opportunity to serve as promoters of philanthropy (Kott, 2005). Organizations outside of the sport industry simply cannot replicate the unique power that PSOs have to encourage philanthropic action and strengthen their community.

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the community development and unification practices employed by the San Francisco Giants Community Fund.

## Research Questions

This study attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. What programs and events are currently being offered through the Giants Community Fund?
2. What partnerships and sponsorships do the Giants Community Fund currently have in place?
3. What fundraising and marketing practices are currently being utilized by the Giants Community Fund?
4. How impactful are the programs and events currently being offered through the Giants Community Fund?
5. How beneficial are the current partnerships and sponsorships of the Giants Community Fund?
6. How effective are the fundraising and marketing practices currently being utilized by the Giants Community Fund?

## Chapter 2

### METHODS

The purpose of this study was to examine the community development and unification practices employed by the San Francisco Giants Community Fund. This chapter includes the following sections: description of organization, description of instrument, and description of procedures.

#### Description of Organization

A case study was conducted on the San Francisco Giants with a special focus on their Community Fund program. As one of the oldest teams in Major League Baseball, the Giants long history originates in 1883 with the New York Gothams, a National League team created by John B. Day and Jim Mutrie (San Francisco Giants, 2020). In May of 1885, with the help of several valued players transferred from the American Association's New York Metropolitans, the Gothams achieved record-breaking success in their first league game. Their inaugural season brought continued success as well as the team's new name, the Giants, which is said to have come from an emotional post-victory speech from manager Jim Mutrie. Under their new name, the Giants claimed their first National League pennant and the world championship in 1888. Following the folding of the Players League in 1891, the Giants moved into their former ballpark, located right next to the Polo Grounds (San Francisco Giants).

Over the next sixty-seven years, the New York Giants welcomed many now-legendary names into their ranks, including John McGraw, Carl Hubbell, and Willie

Mays (San Francisco Giants, 2020). In 1958, owner Horace Stoneham announced their move to the Bay Area where they would rebrand as the San Francisco Giants. From their first home in Seal Stadium, the Giants moved to the notorious Candlestick Stadium in 1960 and eventually settled in Pacific Bell Park in 1999. While the stadium underwent several name changes and is now known as Oracle Park, it remains the Giants current home (San Francisco Giants).

The past decade has brought a tumultuous sequence of events including three World Series victories, a record-breaking *worst* season, and the retirement of longtime manager Bruce Bochy. Moving forward under the leadership of new manager Gabe Kapler, the San Francisco Giants, although currently on “hold” with the rest of professional sport, are striving to continue making a positive community impact both on and off the field.

### Description of Instrument

The instrument utilized in this study was a case study guide developed by the researcher (see Appendix A). The structure of this instrument was an organized table with three elements: area of department, description of area, and a section for additional comments. The instrument was used to examine community development and unification practices and how the San Francisco Giants Community Fund implements these practices. A pilot test was conducted on the Los Angeles Angels Community Department. After the pilot, it was determined that ‘Events’ should be added as a department area in addition to ‘Programs’ to accurately encompass all community relations activities. ‘MLB

Initiatives' was also added to the instrument to provide a frame of reference for assessing the success of the Giants Community Fund.

### Description of Procedures

A case study was conducted on the San Francisco Giants. The instrument utilized in this study was a case study guide developed by the researcher. Research for this case study was conducted during a two-week research period and included an assortment of online sources. The primary resource utilized to gather information on the San Francisco Giants Community Fund was the Major League Baseball website, mlb.com. The website gave access to comprehensive sub-websites on every MLB team, each one replete with information on everything from their franchise history to their current marketing strategies and community relations initiatives. The website devoted to the San Francisco Giants had a page titled 'Giants in the Community' which provided a wealth of information on everything community related. In addition to in-depth sections on their various programs, events, and donation opportunities, the page provided links to further information on the Junior Giants Program, Balldude/Balldudette Program, and the 50/50 Raffle. In addition, several academic journals were used to evaluate the unification and community development practices of the Giants Community Fund in a social context. These included *SPORTDiscus*, *Business Source Premier*, and *Sociological Abstracts*.

## Chapter 3

### PRESENTATION OF THE RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to examine the community development and unification practices employed by the San Francisco Giants Community Fund. A case study was utilized to examine the San Francisco Giants Community Fund. This chapter includes the following sections: programs and events, partnerships and sponsorship, and fundraising and marketing.

#### Programs and Events

The San Francisco Giants Community Fund is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that has operated under the Giants Corporation since their founding in 1991. Through various programs, events, and initiatives, the fund works with a team of athletes, volunteers, and community partners to achieve their mission of “using baseball as a forum to encourage underserved youth and their families to live healthy, productive lives.” In addition to their flagship program, Junior Giants, the fund focuses on Education, Health, and Violence Prevention as their three key areas of development. Thanks to the continuous contributions and support of their partners and the leadership of their thirty-member Board of Directors, the fund has donated over thirty million dollars to community efforts over the last nineteen years. In 2016, the San Francisco Giants were named the Sports Humanitarian Team of the Year by ESPN in recognition of their community outreach efforts. In 2017, the Giants Community Fund was awarded the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Sports Award for, “an innovative and influential

approach to using sports to improve the culture of health in our communities.” As indicated by this recognition, the fund has been successful in many areas, including their flagship program of Junior Giants.

Since its start in 1994, the Junior Giants Program has established ninety leagues throughout Northern California, Nevada, and Oregon which together serve over 24,000 youth participants. The program offers free, noncompetitive, coed summer baseball and softball leagues that supplement their sport instruction with teachings on character development and programs in health, education, and bullying prevention. The leagues are broken down into age-based divisions, offering T-ball for 5-6-year old’s, Minors for 7-9-year old’s, Majors for 10-13-year old’s and Seniors for 14-18-year old’s. Junior Giants shows an emphasized focus on increasing youth sport participation in both male and female athletes. With the launch of their Game ChangeHERS initiative, the program strives to raise their female numbers from their current level of 33% participation to their goal of 50% of all Junior Giants being female. In 2015, the Junior Giants program received the Commissioner’s Award for Philanthropic Excellence. Currently, in response to COVID-19, the program is offering Junior Giants at Home as a safe alternative to their normal in-person leagues. This four-week virtual season will still provide the fundamentals of baseball as well as lessons in health, education, and character development. This programming will be delivered by Junior Giants Americorps Ambassadors, Giants Manager Gabe Kapler, and members of the Giants coaching staff.

Looking ahead, the Giants Community Fund is in the process of expanding their Junior Giants Program with the creation of the Urban Youth Academy. With support from the Giants Corporation, the San Francisco Recreation and Parks Department, and

Major League Baseball, the fund hopes to create an extension of the Junior Giants program that will serve to further their philosophy of cultivating positive character development, academic achievement and improved health in youth. They hope to build a year-round facility equipped with ball fields and a learning center that will host after-school and summertime activities, skills and strategy clinics for both players and coaches, local and regional tournaments, and a tutoring and college preparatory program.

The Giants Community Fund's education program includes Junior Giants specific projects, annual events such as Education Day, and greater community partnerships with Chevron and the Bay Area All-Star Scholarship Team. Round the Bases Reading Program is a summer reading program offered to all Junior Giants players through their Junior Giants Handbooks. Through an incentive program of baseball themed achievement levels and Giants-branded awards, the course aims to encourage youth to continue reading, particularly during the summer. Every year distinguished Junior Giants are among those recognized at Education Day, a special ballpark day devoted to honoring the incoming and graduation classes of Harmon and Sue Burns Scholars. In addition to attending a pregame reception with Giants representatives, the scholars and their families are celebrated in an on-field pregame ceremony during which education grants are also presented to local non-profit organizations. Within the larger Bay Area, the San Francisco Giants are part of the Bay Area All-Star Scholarship Team (B.A.A.S.S.T.). Formed in 1996, the B.A.A.S.S.T. is made up of several Bay Area sport teams that together provide seven high school seniors with \$5,000.00 college scholarships. Each team contributes to the program funding and recognizes the recipients at pregame ceremonies.

The Giants Community Fund's community initiatives are continued through their

health program with youth-focused movements and awareness days at Oracle Park. The Junior Giants Health Program highlights the importance of regular exercise and healthy eating, lessons that are delivered through their interactive Health Line-Up Poster and personalized videos from Giants players and staff. Through a partnership with the Until There's A Cure Foundation, the Giants became the first professional sports team to host an AIDS benefit game. Since that first Until There's A Cure Night in 1994, the Giants Community Fund has distributed over \$500,000.00 in grants each year to Bay Area organizations that focus on HIV/AIDS education and service. The fund also works with the Donor Network West to host an annual Donate Life Day. On this day, the first 25,000 fans to arrive at Oracle Park receive Giants baseball cards with donor information as part of an overall goal to raise awareness about the importance of organ and tissue donations.

Similar to their other two main focuses, the Fund's violence prevention program gives additional attention to its youth-based causes. The Junior Giants Strike Out Violence program provides forums for participants and their families to discuss methods of preventing violence in their neighborhoods. Additionally, the Junior Giants Violence Prevention Speakers program brings Michael Pritchard, a youth advocate and comedian, to Junior Giants teams for annual talks on respect, gang prevention, and anti-bullying messages. Finally, the Junior Giants Strike Out Bullying Contest provides youth with the opportunity to creatively express what their community would look like if it were violence free. With the submission of a poem, song, or piece of art that communicates this message, participants have the chance to win the contest and be recognized at the Strike Out Violence Day pregame ceremony. In partnership with Futures Without Violence, the Giants Community Fund has held Strike Out Violence Day for twenty

years. During the special day, a pregame ceremony includes a message to all attendees on the importance of working together to stop violence in our communities and homes. The annual Jerseys Off Our Giants also takes place on this day, in which hundreds of volunteers sell raffle tickets for the chance to win an autographed Giants jersey with all proceeds being donated to charities such as the La Casa de Las Madres shelter.

In addition to their three capstone programs, the Giants Community Fund operates several other programs including their Balldude/Balldudette Program and Field for Kids Program. Created more than twenty-five years ago, the Balldude/Balldudette Program gives fans a unique opportunity to engage with the game on the field. During each Giants home game, two fans are given an official Giants uniform and the role of fielding foul balls and handing them to children in the crowd. As it is an expectedly popular program, the demand for spots tends to be filled quickly and has become a bidding-option in the Community Fund auctions. The Fields for Kids program, named in honor of former president and managing general partner Peter A. Magowan, is a field renovation program that has been in service since 1995. With the help of donations and partners such as the Good Tidings Foundation, Fields for Kids has fully renovated more than twenty-three youth baseball fields.

### Partnerships and Sponsorship

The Giants Community Fund collaborates with several local and national companies and organizations to continue working towards their goals and furthering their impact on the community. These partners include W20, Good Tidings Foundation, Bank of America, Chevron, Masons 4 Mitts, Norman S. Wright, and, most recently,

Americorps. W20 is a San Francisco -based network of marketing and communications firms that helps the fund expand their volunteer, participant, and donor outreach. Through media relations tactics, content strategy and analytics insight they help the fund engage hard-to-reach audiences and areas. The Good Tidings Foundation is a children’s charity that, since 1995, has worked to support arts, education, athletics, and dreams for youth in communities of need. This support extends to the fund in various programs, including Fields for Kids. The Bank of America serves as the Presenting Sponsor of the Junior Giants program and through its partnership allows the Junior Giants to continue developing and growing.

Some of the fund’s partnerships involve crucial support of certain recognition days and events. The partnership with Chevron is focused on bringing STEM to Junior Giants participants, most notably through “The Giant Launch” in which Junior Giants teams explore the trajectory of a baseball with a launch angle lesson. Masons 4 Mitts operates as a Masons of California program that partners with multiple MLB teams to help underserved youth in California. Each baseball season, masonic lodges in San Francisco, Los Angeles, and San Diego engage in friendly competition to bring baseball to kids in those areas. Additionally, the MLB team from those regions presents a donation check on Masons Night at each of their ballparks. Finally, the Giants Community Fund was awarded an AmeriCorps grant this year, partnering them with a network of national service programs devoted to improving lives and fostering civic engagement.

AmeriCorps will be working mostly with the Junior Giants program, offering lessons and activities in character development, education, health, and bullying prevention training.

## Fundraising and Marketing

As with any nonprofit organization, the Giants Community Fund employs several fundraising and marketing practices and strategies to sustain their wide array of programs and initiatives. In addition to standard online donations, the fund conducts their 50/50 Raffle, selling raffle tickets throughout each baseball season. Each home game, one fan wins half of the total proceeds collected during that game and the other half is donated to the Community Fund which in turn is used to support a variety of charities and community programs. Other donation options include Legacy Giving and the Car Donation Program which accepts cars, trucks, RVs, and even boats as benefits to the Junior Giants program.

Along with donations, the Community Fund hosts monetary and supply drives including the Glove Drive and Stretch Drive, both of which support the Junior Giants Program. The Glove Drive was created in response to the 12,000 kids who participate in Junior Giants but do not own their own glove. Presented by the Bank of America, the annual drive asks for new or used gloves and offers donors a Willie McCovey jersey pin or cable car pin. The Junior Giants Stretch Drive is named for the late Willie “Stretch” McCovey. Since 2009, it has been dedicated to raising both money and awareness for the Junior Giants program.

Lastly, the Community Fund utilizes awards and other forms of recognition to show appreciation to those who support and participate in their programs and raise awareness of their actions. The Isabelle Lemon Community Spirit Award is given to one volunteer each year who “exemplifies the commitment to community service and ‘can-do’ spirit of Giants Community Fund Board Member Isabelle Lemon.” The award winner

is honored during a home plate ceremony and receives a \$2,500.00 grant for the nonprofit organization to which they are committed as a volunteer. The Junior Giants Hall of Fame, similar to the MLB Hall of Fame, “honors outstanding past contributions, recognizes current achievements and showcases our leagues, coaches and lead organizers who have helped to build the Junior Giants program over the years.”

A second Junior Giants recognition is the Harmon and Sue Burns Scholarship, named in honor of the late Giants owners, which awards ten eighth-grade Junior Giants with a \$5,000.00 scholarship. The scholars are inducted into the Scholars Program and are honored at a home plate ceremony during the previously mentioned Education Day. Lastly, the Willie Mac Award, also named in honor of Willie McCovey, serves as the Junior Giants version of the annual award given to a Giants player by his teammates. The award goes to “one outstanding Junior Giants player and coach/team parent that best represents their league... [who] exemplifies confidence, integrity, leadership, and teamwork both on and off the field.” Once recipients are chosen by their league commissioner, they and a guest are invited to attend a special luncheon after the season’s end.

## Chapter 4

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The San Francisco Giants Community Fund's numerous programs, events, and partnerships strive to enact positive and meaningful change in the Bay Area community, the greater Northern California area and beyond. This concluding chapter includes the following: a discussion of the findings, limitations of the research, conclusions based on research questions, and recommendations for the future.

#### Discussion

Over the last few decades, the programs and events provided by the San Francisco Giants Community Fund have had a profound positive impact throughout their local community and beyond. According to Babiak et al. (2012), it is important that professional sport teams and athletes make strong connections with the community, particularly given the amount of scrutiny they receive from the media. Furthermore, as stated by Carroll (1999), professional sport organizations have moral and discretionary responsibilities for contributing their resources to the community. The Giants' multifaceted programs focus on key areas of health, education, and violence prevention. Implemented through special events and ongoing programs, these initiatives provide multiple ways for fans to engage and show support. By offering free programs such as Junior Giants and emphasizing female participation, they uphold the values of accessibility and inclusivity. In the professional sport industry, the Giants an exemplary

team in terms of community development, philanthropic endeavors, and responsibly utilizing their platform. As noted by Kott (2005), the celebrity status of professional sport organizations allows them to act as an icon to promote the importance of philanthropy. Given that their past actions and current practices align with the goals of a professional sport organization, the San Francisco Giants should continue their pursuit of positive community impact including the innovation and adaptation necessary to stay relevant and applicable in this ever-changing society.

The San Francisco Giants Community Fund's various partnerships and sponsorships are mutually beneficial financially and socially. As noted by Diehl (2007), the social importance of these partnerships lies in the idea that professional sport organizations can effectively facilitate the achievement of the social objectives of their non-profit partners. The Giant's partnerships cover an array of local and national organizations, including corporations, non-profits, and other professional sport teams. This diversity of partners enables them to increase the range of their impact and ultimately achieve more positive change in more communities. Within not only the MLB but all industries, the Giants' partnerships illustrate the benefits of cooperation and collaboration, specifically demonstrating how much more can be accomplished by multiple organizations coming together under a shared goal. While their current repertoire of partners and sponsors has proven beneficial and successful, the Giants should look to expand their partnerships to include new organizations such as independent businesses and organizations that focus on areas or groups that the Giants are not currently connected to.

The Giants Community Fund's current fundraising and marketing practices are sufficient but not as effective as they could be. While the fund is well supported and financially stable, overall awareness of their programs and efforts is lacking. Many of their marketing initiatives are passive and rely on fan initiation rather than encouraging participation through engagement. Additionally, the Giants corporation must balance their marketing funding between promotion of the team itself and promotion of their community development programs. While it is important that both facets of the corporation are supported, a stronger social media presence, cause-related marketing and intentional messaging could greatly improve overall awareness of the Community Fund. Du et al. (2010) points out that a consumer's evaluations of a professional sport organization may vary by how its philanthropic activities are described in a marketing message along with how that message is distributed. Across the professional sport industry, all teams should engage in cause-related marketing to properly promote their good deeds in an intentional and effective manner. Although their current practices are sufficient, there is certainly room for improvement in the Giants Community Funds' fundraising and marketing. They need to put more emphasis on their community development undertaking and utilize cause-related marketing strategies to highlight their efforts and raise general awareness of the causes that they support.

There were multiple limitations that impacted this study. First, the research collected for this study consisted solely of online resources accessed primarily through digital databases. This restricted method could introduce bias by inhibiting access to information that could have been useful for the case study. Most of the resources utilized were case studies from related fields without direct examples from the MLB and did not

provide any personal experience from participants of the community development programs. Access to interviews of people who participated in Junior Giants or other programs or who worked for the Giants Community Fund Olympics could have added valuable insight and therefore more credibility to the study. The researcher may have also expressed bias due to their background as an athlete and their upbringing as a San Francisco Giants fan. This could have led to a subconscious ignorance of negative findings and disparate reporting of accomplishments.

Overall, the San Francisco Giants Community Fund is a commendable example of conduct for professional sport organizations. They engage in inclusive, purposeful, multi-faceted programming and events. They utilize a variety of partnerships to increase their resources and achieve their goals of enacting positive impact in the community and beyond. Given the extent of their accomplishments, they need to improve their marketing to increase awareness and support of their initiatives.

### Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions are drawn:

1. The San Francisco Giants Community Fund offers numerous programs and events including Education Day, Until There's A Cure Night, and their flagship program Junior Giants.
2. The Giants Community Fund currently has several sponsorships and partnerships with a wide variety of organizations including Good Tidings Foundation, Bank of America, and Americorps.

3. The Giants Community Fund is currently utilizing passive marketing and fundraising efforts that include the 50/50 Raffle, Glove Drive, and online donation.
4. The programs and events currently being offered through the Giants Community Fund are successfully improving communities through their multi-faceted, accessible, and meaningful offerings.
5. The current partnerships and sponsorships of the Giants Community Fund are beneficial to both the Giants Corporation and their partners in terms of financial strength and social presence.
6. The fundraising and marketing practices currently being utilized by the Giants Community Fund are sufficient in supporting their present endeavors but could be greatly improved for future progress.

### Recommendations

Based on the conclusions of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. The professional sport industry should utilize its unique platform to emphasize community development initiatives and philanthropic aims to achieve positive impacts in their communities.
2. The San Francisco Giants Community Fund should continue their current programming and event offerings and strive for innovation and adaptation in progressing forward.

3. The Giants Community Fund should seek to strengthen their current sponsor and partner relationships and expand their partnership to new areas and organizations.
4. The Giants Community Fund should enhance their fundraising and marketing efforts through cause-related marketing, intentional messaging, and overall increased emphasis on highlighting their philanthropic actions.
5. Future research should conduct a comparative analysis between the San Francisco Giants and another similarly established MLB team and incorporate interviews from participants in the programs of both teams.

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## APPENDIXES

Appendix A

Instrument

INSTRUMENT

<b>Area of department</b>	<b>Description of area</b>	<b>Additional comments</b>
Fundraising		
Marketing		
Partnerships		
Sponsorship		
Donations		
Events		
Programs		
MLB Initiatives		