

Agency for Change Podcast: Alec Gorynski, President and CEO, Lincoln Community Foundation

Alec Gorynski:

Community support is a responsibility, not a privilege. Generosity is a responsibility, not a privilege.

Announcer:

Welcome to Agency for Change, a podcast from KidGlov that brings you the stories of changemakers who are actively working to improve our communities. In every episode, we'll meet with people who are making a lasting impact in the places we call home.

Lyn Wineman:

A matchmaker for nonprofits and donors, that's one way you could describe the organization I am speaking with today, which has helped connect these two groups since 1955, in the name of philanthropy, improving Lincoln, Nebraska's quality of life and fostering community collaboration. And, at the time that this episode airs, there'll be less than 24 hours away from celebrating perhaps their biggest event of the year, Give to Lincoln Day.

Lyn Wineman:

You might have guessed it by now. I'm talking about Lincoln Community Foundation. Sharp-eared listeners might remember hearing from Barb Bartle, the former president of the foundation, who was on the show in September of 2020. Barb has recently retired, leaving the organization in very capable hands of the guest you're about to hear from in just a moment.

Lyn Wineman:

But before we go any further, let me introduce myself. If you're listening for the first time today, hello, I'm Lyn Wineman, president and chief strategist at KidGlov, and this is the Agency for Change podcast. I'm joined today by Alec Gorynski, president of the Lincoln Community Foundation, which helps donors accomplish their philanthropic goals, and works to provide the leadership and resources to make Lincoln a better place for everyone.

Lyn Wineman:

Alec, welcome to the podcast.

Alec Gorynski:

Thank you. It's a pleasure to be here, have a conversation with fellow change makers like yourself and KidGlov.

Lyn Wineman:

Ah, you hit my favorite word there, changemakers. I find it such a great honor to get to talk to people like you, Alec. And, I hope my description in the intro did justice to the Lincoln Community Foundation. But, I'd love to hear how you would describe what the foundation does, especially to those who may not be familiar with its work.

Alec Gorynski:

Yeah, I'd love that chance. Thank you. The challenge is that, people hear the term foundation, and they automatically assume that we're an organization that is involved in grant making as our primary purpose. And while we do grant making, that is really a secondary purpose, and I think a byproduct of what we do. We're really unique in that, we are, I would describe ourselves as a partner in philanthropy. Individuals across the board want to practice community giving and be generous. And, the Lincoln Community Foundation is a place where people can do that in partnership with.

Alec Gorynski:

So, whether or not you want to have a charitable checkbook that you're making real time distributions out of, to causes that are meaningful and speak to you now, or you want to set up an endowment and support Lincoln in perpetuity or a cause in perpetuity, you can do anything and everything kind of in there. I like to say that we have, in terms of our role as that philanthropic partner, we have something for everyone. And so there are so many unique ways in which people partner with us, in order to fulfill their philanthropic goals.

Alec Gorynski:

We also do one other thing though that's a little bit different than a traditional foundation, and that is what we do in terms of community leadership. We're an organization that has Lincoln's best interest at heart, plain and simple, period. And the future of Lincoln is at the core of what we do, period. Plain and simple. To express that, we have to go beyond just our work as a philanthropic partner, and we have to lean into that role and that responsibility, and we call that community leadership.

Alec Gorynski:

Community leadership is doing the work to understand the challenges and the needs and the opportunities that exist in our community, and we do that through something called Lincoln Vital Signs. It's helping establish priorities and establishing a shared community agenda for change in our community, and we do that through something called Prosper Lincoln. And it's helping connect the dots between those needs and those opportunities that are in front of us, and the philanthropic resources that we and our donors have in helping educate and inform and inspire our donors to support causes that are really making a difference. And that's what the Lincoln Community Foundation is. We are a partner in philanthropy.

Lyn Wineman:

Alec, I'm so glad you mentioned that, and KidGlov is so proud to have been on the front lines of helping to promote Vital Signs and Prosper Lincoln, because it's such a strategic way to support the community. And, anybody who hasn't seen Vital Signs, I think when people review that report, the first thing they say is, "Wow, I didn't realize, I didn't know we have a great community, but we have work to do as well." And I think the Lincoln Community Foundation, in your community leadership, really helps us get there. So, we're going to talk about a number of topics today, related to the organization's work. But, Alec, I'd like to talk about you a little bit. How would you describe yourself?

Alec Gorynski:

I would describe myself as someone who is passionate about community development, about the best interest and the outcomes of the communities in which I've lived and worked in and spent time in. And then I'm also skilled at finance and money, and really kind of bridging the gaps between those two things

is how I would say I've spent my career, that plus in areas of strategy and leadership and organizational leadership and things of that nature. I would say that I have practiced that both professionally and personally. Professionally, I've spent my career as a community development, finance and philanthropy kind of professional and technical expert on behalf of big corporations to individual donors, on behalf of foundations, on behalf of local governments, just finding ways to channel either charitable resources or capital towards really meaningful areas in our community that...

Alec Gorynski:

The term community development is often misunderstood, or maybe it's just very nebulous. And, I liken it to investing in the assets that are most needed to economically elevate and create prosperity for everyone in our community. Things like affordable housing and workforce development and economic development, education, early childhood education, our neighborhoods, all of those things need to be, and healthcare. All of those things need to be strong and thriving, but also work together. And so the function of community development is to identify the opportunities, and the challenges within those particular fields, and pump energy and resources into them, so that they're kind of churning really well.

Alec Gorynski:

In addition to that, I also have, historically, and look forward to leaning into that here in Lincoln, as we've just moved here about a month ago, and personally as well, I've spent a lot of time on boards of directors of nonprofit organizations, both organizations that I've invested in on behalf of the organizations that I've had the opportunity to lead with, as well as organizations that just speak to me and resonate with me. I've had the chance to help start a couple of nonprofit organizations and just really try to get involved in any way that I can.

Alec Gorynski:

I believe in the concept of skills-based volunteerism. And, it's not to say that not all volunteerism is meaningful. It is. But, there are a few things that I know and do well. And, I really believe in lending those to causes that I really care about. So, I would practice that on my own time as well.

Alec Gorynski:

I would also describe myself as a father and a husband. I think those are really important terms to use. I love my family and really enjoy my role with my family. I would also describe myself as a really poor gardener and a really bad golfer.

Lyn Wineman:

Well, how would you even have time for either of those things, right? I'm going to give you some grace there.

Alec Gorynski:

Thank you.

Lyn Wineman:

So, Alec, you mentioned you just moved your family back from Omaha to Lincoln in March after taking this position. But prior to this Lincoln was home, what's it like being back in your old stomping grounds?

Alec Gorynski:

I would put two words on it. The first is, it's warm. Certainly not the temperature, that hasn't been that warm. But the reception and the welcome has been incredibly warm. And, whether it is professionally with donors and board members and stakeholders have engaged me with open arms and demonstrated their commitment to this organization and their hope for this organization and their candid thoughts about this organization and our responsibility to this community. And so that has been really warm. Personally, it's also been warm, from neighbors to fellow parents of our school age kids. That's been a really warm and welcoming reception as well.

Alec Gorynski:

And so, the other way in which I would describe it is a little bit nostalgic. Driving down O Street, for example, and seeing something that was there when I was a kid. I mean, I haven't lived here in 25 years. Or seeing the school that I went to or the home I grew up in. What's really nostalgic is, I'm sitting here at the Lincoln Community Foundation offices right on Centennial Mall. My mom worked next door at what was the telephone company.

Lyn Wineman:

Oh, wow. My dad worked at the telephone company too. I remember that. Right. Yeah.

Alec Gorynski:

I'm sure they knew each other. And so, we used to walk around the corner over to the corn popper and go into the garden back here.

Lyn Wineman:

Yes.

Alec Gorynski:

And get a treat when we would pick her up from work. And, come to find out, that's the Lincoln Community Foundation Garden. So there's been a lot of nostalgia as well, so it's really nice to be home.

Lyn Wineman:

Ah, that's awesome. So, Alec, the other thing that you mentioned, I mean, you talked so much about strengths-based volunteerism and community development. I'm picturing you as a youngster going to school in Lincoln, on the playground saying, "I want to be a community developer when I grow up." I actually heard you entertained becoming a police officer. I'm really curious what steered you towards nonprofit and community development work instead.

Alec Gorynski:

My interest of being a police officer certainly dates back to when I was a kid. And I think a lot of kids probably maybe romanticized being a police officer. The car, the lights, the uniform. You get to go around and talk to kids at schools and hand out stickers and whatever.

Alec Gorynski:

As I got older though, I really took that interest to the next level. When I was in high school, I became a police cadet. And, it was a really unique opportunity to explore the field of law enforcement, at a level

much greater than anybody my age otherwise could. We're given assignments. In terms of kind of work assignments, we went on duty and on patrol with officers. We got together and trained regularly. We went to national competitions. That did two things for me. And then from there, I also... To get a criminal justice degree in college.

Alec Gorynski:

But having done that experience, it did two things for me. Number one, it strengthened my interest, and better defined my interest in community service, I think. I think that truly was what, at a more cerebral level is what I was after. It did teach me though that while I have a fondness and appreciation for law enforcement specifically, that wasn't the best way in which I could use my career to focus on community service.

Alec Gorynski:

So, after college, I decided to pursue a master's in public administration, which is like all things in kind of masters in community service, whether it be government or nonprofit or community development and democracy and all those kinds of things. And that's where I really kind of came to learn and value and appreciate the function of nonprofit organizations and the work that they do for our community. So I knew then that I wanted to have a career in that. And I've had the great fortune in dedicating my career to that. So it's been a really valuable time spent.

Lyn Wineman:

I just love hearing about people's journeys. And I'm curious, did you get to hand out any stickers as a cadet?

Alec Gorynski:

There were no stickers, no.

Lyn Wineman:

No stickers. It's just a myth.

Alec Gorynski:

It was. But only because, when I was a cadet, we would go on these ride-alongs, go on patrol. I always... I mean, I spent my one Saturday a month doing this. My friends were going to the movies or the arcade or parties or whatever, and I would do this. But I would do the overnight shift because, naturally, there's a lot of excitement there. Not a lot of stickers to give out to kids at the night shift.

Lyn Wineman:

Yeah. Probably, you should just avoid stickers altogether. I love it. So, Alec, let's take this further. You stepped into this role following Barb Bartle, who actually was on the podcast a while ago. And, I'm curious what the experience has been like. And, Barb was there for a long time. Did she leave you any words of advice or guidance from one president to the next?

Alec Gorynski:

She did. I got the chance to know Barb for a couple of years, actually. That's how I originally got to know the Lincoln Community Foundation. We talked about Prosper Lincoln, and it was through my work at a

prior organization where I did a lot of work in affordable housing and financing affordable housing projects, and in particular, the role those philanthropic institutions can play. And so, I got brought in on a project that they were doing. And that's where I had a firsthand chance to see the proactive community leadership work that this organization was doing and was really just blown away by it. So I've gotten to know her for a while.

Alec Gorynski:

Upon kind of taking over this organization and stepping into this position, a lot of people have made the comment that I've got big shoes to fill, and I appreciate that. That's a natural thing to say. This organization is in a fantastic spot. It's got a great financial position. It's got a great team. It's got a great reputation. And all of that is because of the work that Barb and her team, what they've done over the last 12 years. So I don't accept the premise that I'm filling shoes. I like to believe that we're standing on her shoulders, because we really are. I mean, we are not able to think about the next generation of impact that we're going to have, but for the work that she and her team have done over the last 12 years. So I have a great appreciation for her.

Alec Gorynski:

And she did have a lot of things to say, just to teach me about the past and how we got to where we are right now. She was extremely generous with her time. As she was winding down her time here, we spent... I had a three-month runway of time before I kind of stepped into this position. So we spent a lot of time together.

Lyn Wineman:

That's a nice transition. Yeah.

Alec Gorynski:

It was great.

Alec Gorynski:

I would say the one thing that I took away from Barb, which I thought was extremely thoughtful of her, was that, she really encouraged me to shape it as I see fit, and as the team sees fit now. I think she was very proud of what she accomplished and knew that the foundation she built was going to be around for the next generation. At the same time, she acknowledged that it was time for a next kind of scope of leadership to come in. And so she was very generous and gracious with that perspective.

Alec Gorynski:

But we continue to touch base. I think my wife and I are having dinner with her and her husband, Bob, soon. And if I've got a question or a thought, she's just a text or a phone call away. But we really owe a lot to Barb.

Lyn Wineman:

Ah, yeah. She was a fantastic leader, and I know she's excited about what you have in store as well. And I'm curious, Alec, what big goals are you excited about accomplishing at the Lincoln Community Foundation?

Alec Gorynski:

I think the most important goal that we have in the short-term is to define our long-term growth and impact strategy, otherwise known as a strategic plan and a nonprofit 101 there. And, I'm very intentional about not coming here and prescribing what we should do. Rather, be intentional about the way in which we will work together, to come up with our long-term growth and impact plans, with our leadership team, with our board of directors, with stakeholders in the community who rely on and partner with the community foundation. So, we, together, will be coming up with our long-term growth and impact plan.

Alec Gorynski:

That's not to say that I don't have ideas and thoughts. I do. I will share one with you that I think is really important. I've spent my last few months here meeting with a lot of folks, developing relationship with fellow Lincolnites now and-

Lyn Wineman:

Sounds like a great way to start, yeah.

Alec Gorynski:

It is. And, I would say that there have been a number of themes. One theme that has come out, which I think is really shaping what I think the big goal is for this organization, and more existential than just goal, like vision and purpose, and that is to celebrate and support and grow the culture of philanthropy and generosity in this community. Generosity takes so many shapes and forms, whether it's serving meals at the soup kitchen, whether it's being kind to a kid in school. Or it's the big charitable contributions that are shaping the future of this community. And so, I think it's our responsibility to celebrate and grow the culture of philanthropy in this community.

Alec Gorynski:

Now, certainly, that is part and parcel of our mission, because some of that philanthropy will flow through us and in partnership with us, to reference the description I gave of ourselves earlier in the interview here. Not all of it will, and that's okay too. I mean, at the end of the day, we're here to support the economic and social prosperity of Lincoln forever. And, not all of that philanthropic activity is going to flow through us. It's going to go to others, and at the end of the day, Lincoln's going to win.

Alec Gorynski:

And so that's what I think our big goal is. The more specific ways in which we get there, and the more measurable ways we can evaluate growing the culture of philanthropy in this community, we'll figure that out over the next few months.

Lyn Wineman:

Yeah. That's one thing I love about foundations and nonprofit organizations is that, you don't need to compete. A rising tide lifts all ships there, right? And, philanthropy to Lincoln causes, whether it goes through the foundation or not, benefits the community. However, I know that there are special things that you can do when they do come through the foundation. And, I'm even thinking, Alec, of the last few years. The pandemic has really brought to light some specific needs in the community, places like the

food bank and community health organizations. And I'm curious, from your perspective, what do you think the next few years hold for these types of nonprofits in terms of financial need?

Alec Gorynski:

Yeah. I would say that it's unfortunately going to grow, or fortunately going to grow. I guess it depends on how you look at it. It's unfortunately going to grow, because a lot of what you just described was the growth in financial need of organizations because of the growth and demand that was placed on those organizations. And certainly, that was because of the pandemic and the economic impacts of the pandemic. And, the market does challenging things, and the economy does weird things. I'm not a macroeconomics by any means.

Alec Gorynski:

But, as there continues to be challenges and instability, in our world economy and our regional economy and our local economy, that is going to continue to put pressure, especially on the human service organizations, it's going to continue to put pressure on them to rise to the occasion. And therefore, they're going to need to find support for that.

Alec Gorynski:

I think we're also going to see financial need grow because of a couple of macroeconomic factors, in particular labor and workforce. Certainly, we hear all the talk about labor shortages and that is true. And that is particularly... We're seeing that as well, I should say, a lot in nonprofit sector. Nonprofits have not been known for their high wages. They've had good wages, and some of their appeal has been really working for an organization that is mission-oriented and making a difference. And that will continue to be true. At the same time though, nonprofit organizations have to keep up with the market and pay within a range, if even, at the lower end of the range. And so, that then, of course, I think, is going to continue to put demand on philanthropic resources.

Alec Gorynski:

And I think one of the most important things there that we can think about, in terms of the role of philanthropy, is flexible philanthropic capital, and providing the flexibility to nonprofit organizations to use the resources, to support their operations, to support programs as their needs will continue to evolve and rise. I do believe though, philanthropy will continue to rise to the occasion. So just like our nonprofit partners have risen to the occasion over the past few years, philanthropy has really risen to the occasion. Evidenced by...

Alec Gorynski:

One data point I'll point out is that, contributions to the Lincoln Community Foundations have increased exponentially over the past couple of years, almost doubling from 2020 to 2021. And, those contributions are not contributions to our operations, to us, as we talked about earlier because we're a partner in philanthropy. Those contributions represent philanthropic interest and philanthropic intent in our community. Those contributions are two funds that are now, or in the short term, or in perpetuity, we'll reinvest into our community time and time again. So, I'm floored by the generous spirit and the culture of generosity that we're seeing firsthand here at the Lincoln Community Foundation. And I look forward to continuing to support it, encourage it and celebrate it.

Lyn Wineman:

Alec, I was aware of that fact, but hearing you say it again, how Lincolmites have responded philanthropically during a time of difficulty and need, is one of the things that makes me proud of being from Lincoln, Nebraska. So let's talk about that a little bit more. What are some of the programs and events that the foundation uses to raise funds throughout the year?

Alec Gorynski:

Much like our organization is unique, our approach to partnering with individuals on philanthropy is also a little unique. Oftentimes, with an organization, you've got an annual appeal or a fundraiser event or lots of grant writing and grant making craps. And there is some of that, to be sure. I think the most meaningful way in which we help individuals understand their philanthropic potential and the partnership that we could have with them to support their philanthropic goals, is really through one-on-one conversations and developing meaningful relationships with individuals.

Alec Gorynski:

Philanthropy is an incredibly personal thing, and it motivates and inspires and excites individuals to see how they can make a difference. And, in order to help people with their philanthropic and their legacy goals, it's really important that we get to the root of what's driving them. And so that's why, our function as a "fundraiser" is really done through developing relationships with individuals. In a weekly staff meeting or whatever the case may be, a name will come up of an individual, for whatever reason, maybe they have a question about their fund, or they want to do something in the community with their money, or they want to figure out if the community foundation can partner with them.

Alec Gorynski:

And the thing that I'm continuously blown away by is the depth of understanding our team has of these individuals. They know their history. They know their career. They know their family. They probably know their blood type for all I know. And, it's just the level of relationship that we've taken the time to build is incredibly important. And I think that that's a lost art, but one that has not been lost at the Lincoln Community Foundation. Everything out there has the potential to be incredibly commoditized. Is that a word? Can I say that, commoditized?

Lyn Wineman:

You can say that. It's totally a word.

Alec Gorynski:

And so the thing to differentiate us and to help us fulfill our mission, is to develop really meaningful relationships with individuals. So that's what we do.

Alec Gorynski:

Now, that isn't to say that there aren't a couple of programs or events that we put on. One of the big things that we do, that we're really excited to celebrate here really shortly, is Give to Lincoln Day.

Lyn Wineman:

Which is tomorrow. Give to Lincoln Day is tomorrow.

Alec Gorynski:

That's right. That's right. And so, that's one of the big ways in which we are able to raise money, again, not for us, but for our community, together.

Lyn Wineman:

Yeah. Yeah. So tell us more about Give to Lincoln Day. It's hard for me to imagine that somebody lives here and hasn't heard of it, but maybe they haven't. And also, we have a lot of listeners from across the country. Talk to us more about Give to Lincoln Day, and some of the things the community has been able to accomplish as a result of funds raised during Give to Lincoln Day.

Alec Gorynski:

Absolutely. Give to Lincoln Day. 24 hours. One day. What could our community come together and do, in a charitable sense, in one day? And that's what Give to Lincoln Day is all about. There are 477, I think, give or take, I'm sure someone will correct me after the fact, but we'll go with it. 477 nonprofit organizations that are registered for Give to Lincoln Day. These are organizations that... There are other criteria. Certainly, they're all nonprofit organizations. But really at their core, they are located in Lincoln, Nebraska, and they're committed to impacting Lincoln, Nebraska, particularly with the funds raised through Give to Lincoln Day.

Alec Gorynski:

What really excites me about Give to Lincoln Day, and this goes back to kind of the goals and the purpose of our organization that we were talking about earlier, is that, it is one day to celebrate the function of giving and the function of generosity and the impact that we can make when we come together. Last year, we raised nearly \$8 million.

Lyn Wineman:

That's a lot of money.

Alec Gorynski:

It is a lot of money. Through Give to Lincoln Day. And, that money was spread around the 420 some odd, or excuse me, 450, some odd nonprofit organizations last year. And so that's what really excites me is... I like the concept of teams. I like the concept of comradery. I like the concept of a brotherhood or sisterhood, and kind of everybody coming together and doing something together. That's what really gets me going with Give to Lincoln Day.

Alec Gorynski:

The other thing that's really meaningful is the match that we are able to provide through Give to Lincoln Day. We have some of our own grant making resources. We have raised match contributions from some really generous sponsors. Please check them out on our website, which we'll cover later, I'm sure.

Lyn Wineman:

We will.

Alec Gorynski:

And so, the match is really important, because a percentage... Each one of those organizations is able to receive a prorated portion of the match pool. And so that's really meaningful.

Alec Gorynski:

This is our 11th year of Give to Lincoln Day. And so you talk about some of the things that the community's been able to accomplish over the last 10 years then. Our community has raised over \$41 million for organizations and causes that are working in and for Lincoln. And that's an incredibly tremendous outcome.

Alec Gorynski:

Now, in many cases, we don't know the specific use of every single dollar, and that's okay. Because one thing that we've really encouraged our nonprofit partners to do, through Give to Lincoln Day, is raise that unrestricted flexible money, like I spoke about earlier-

Lyn Wineman:

The money they need in years like this, when costs are going up unexpectedly, exponentially, yeah.

Alec Gorynski:

That's exactly right. And so, it gives them an opportunity to raise money to support the things that they have going on. I mean, it can pay to keep the lights on. That's really important. You can't do meaningful work in the dark.

Lyn Wineman:

In the dark.

Alec Gorynski:

That's exactly right. And so that's really important.

Alec Gorynski:

I think it's also done a couple of other things. Well, it's both for the big and the small organizations. So, I think it's done a couple of other things. It's given us an opportunity to identify potential donors in our community that have the potential to be more generous and to support causes. And for us, it introduces us to them and helps us have a conversation with them.

Alec Gorynski:

It does the same thing for those organizations that participate in Give to Lincoln Day. They identified new donors through Give to Lincoln Day and started to develop new relationships through Give to Lincoln Day. So we're able to perpetuate the cycle of philanthropy, well after Give to Lincoln Day. So the impact is more than just a day, but we get one day to celebrate it, and it's a lot of fun.

Lyn Wineman:

Yeah. KidGlov, as many people know, works with a number of nonprofits who are on that list of 477. And, it's fun for us to see, as part of their strategic planning, they include Give to Lincoln Day and set goals to be on the front page of the leader board, or to increase their money-making more than they did the year before, or to figure out how to integrate the assets. So it's been fun for us to see that. But, Alec, what would you say to donors? I mean, there is a big need, and we've talked about \$41 million in 10 years. What if I'm a smaller donor? I don't know if my donation will make a difference. What words of encouragement would you have?

Alec Gorynski:

I would say that absolutely every dollar matters. And that sounds cheesy. It is not cheesy. It's like saying every vote matters. Every vote matters, right? And that can be true for both the big organizations and what we call our small but mighty organizations. If you think about the small but mighty organizations, your \$10 goes a lot further on a small budget, and makes up a larger percentage of the small budget. So, keep that in mind, number one.

Alec Gorynski:

Number two, the big organizations, a lot of their funds are raised through grants, maybe their government grants or their foundation grants, with very particular rules and parameters. And so again, through Give to Lincoln Day, those big organizations are able to enjoy some flexibility in the resources that they raise through Give to Lincoln Day. So truly, every dollar matters, particularly when you think about how those dollars are used uniquely, relative to everything else the organization has going on.

Lyn Wineman:

Ah, that's fantastic. I think too, it's kind of the beginning of a relationship. If you are a donor that's maybe giving a smaller amount, but for the first time, out of those 477 nonprofits, you are going to find something or several causes that you can be very passionate about. And it's the beginning of your chance to work with and support that organization.

Alec Gorynski:

There are so many ways in which people can participate in Give to Lincoln Day, and I love every one of these narratives, and I'll share a couple of them with you if that's okay.

Lyn Wineman:

Perfect.

Alec Gorynski:

So on one hand, if you're listening to this and you live in Lincoln, over the past few weeks, you've likely gotten lots of mail from different organizations who participate in Give to Lincoln Day, encouraging you to give to-

Lyn Wineman:

And maybe a few emails too. You've probably gotten a few emails too.

Alec Gorynski:

That's exactly right. And I actually think that's great. And so, you could arrive at Give to Lincoln Day, you could arrive at givetolincoln.com, and you could already know what you're going to support. And that's great.

Alec Gorynski:

The other narrative are the individuals that approach Give to Lincoln Day with an open mind, which I'm not saying the other way is bad. Please don't hear that. But approach Give to Lincoln Day, going to the website, with the intention of seeing what's going on. Who's doing great and you want to help make the next whatever number of money. Who isn't doing that great during Give to Lincoln Day and you can

support a little bit more. Read through the profiles of the organizations. And, what's a cause that resonates with you? What's an organization you never knew existed, that you thought, "Wow, that's really cool. I've always said someone should do that. And here they are doing that."?

Alec Gorynski:

During Give to Lincoln Day, and in the past and other community-giving events, we invite our kids to be a part of that with us, and I look forward to doing that again this year.

Lyn Wineman:

I love that. That's such a great idea.

Alec Gorynski:

My wife and I will sit down with our laptop, and we'll say, "Okay, what do you care about?" And oftentimes, dogs come up. Police officers come up. Our son, one time, learned about refugees and-

Lyn Wineman:

Oh, wow.

Alec Gorynski:

There was some international crisis happening, and so he wanted to know if there was any way we could support refugee work. And so we were able to do that. And we contribute some of our own money to do that. He has a savings account, and so we've asked him to contribute to that as well.

Lyn Wineman:

That's amazing.

Alec Gorynski:

And he did it without thinking twice about it. And so, there are so many ways in which people can participate in Give to Lincoln Day. It's really fun and exciting to be generous. It's a motivating thing to be generous.

Lyn Wineman:

I love that. Alec, it's kind of like, honestly, online shopping for philanthropy, right? You can search by topic. I do. I am one of those people that, when I go to a silent auction, I always bid on the things that don't have bids, just because I feel sorry for them. But you can even, on Give to Lincoln Day, you can look for maybe some of those nonprofits who either are on the top of the leaderboard or the second page, or maybe they're on the last page, and they could use a little boost there too. So, it's a good way to go about it-

Alec Gorynski:

Our team though might correct me. I don't know. I actually don't even know if we have a leaderboard or not. You might know that better than I would.

Lyn Wineman:

Oh, yeah. Yeah. You have a leaderboard. You have a leaderboard, and it's very important to these nonprofits. I seriously know of several, where it's their goal this year to move from the second page of the leaderboard, to the first page of the leaderboard. That's how important it is to them. So, cool.

Alec Gorynski:

That's great.

Lyn Wineman:

All right, Alec. I'm going to ask you my favorite question next, which has nothing to do with Give to Lincoln Day, but everything to do with inspiration and motivation. And, I am inspired by motivational quotes. And, could you give us a few of your own words of wisdom for our listeners?

Alec Gorynski:

Sure. Well, it's going to be in the space of everything that we've talked about probably, because it's what I've spent my life's work doing is around community and around philanthropy. Philanthropy can often be thought of as a privilege. And, I don't necessarily accept that. I get why it's thought that way, primarily because of the word philanthropy itself. It's also hard to say, right? So-

Lyn Wineman:

It is hard, and spell. Hard to say and spell.

Alec Gorynski:

Exactly, exactly. But I don't accept that. And again, I do think it's part of what the word is. So we've been tinkering here, and in partnership with you guys, with maybe what the words are, as we think about our future as an organization, what are the right words? Community support? Generosity? Giving? Let's not get caught up in what those specific words are right now.

Alec Gorynski:

I think the spirit holds true though, that philanthropy is a responsibility, not a privilege. And so again, let's think about how maybe we can replace philanthropy, so we can make it seem as approachable as it is and should be. Community support is a responsibility, not a privilege. Generosity is a responsibility, not a privilege. In any shape or form it takes, in any amount that individuals are willing and capable of giving, the volume is not what matters. The act of generosity, the act of giving, the act of supporting our community is a responsibility and what matters.

Alec Gorynski:

So, there's no one quote in there, but the spirit of what I'm saying, I think, can be heard.

Lyn Wineman:

There's a lot. There's a lot of good things in there. And I think you let it off with the most important part. Philanthropy is a responsibility and not a privilege. And I think there's so much good stuff in there, Alec. So, you referenced a website earlier. For listeners who would like to find out more about Lincoln Community Foundation, maybe take that first step into entering into a conversation or even finding out more about Give to Lincoln Day. What's the best way to find you?

Alec Gorynski:

I will give you two websites, if that's all right.

Lyn Wineman:

Perfect.

Alec Gorynski:

The Lincoln Community Foundation, we are found easily at lcf.org.

Lyn Wineman:

One of the easiest web addresses you can find.

Alec Gorynski:

Six letters, one punctuation mark. And then, for Give to Lincoln Day, which is actually the website that we would like you to visit, to see the organizations, to make your contributions, to see our generous match sponsors, who I encourage you to check out and thank, check out givetolincoln.com.

Lyn Wineman:

Givetolincoln.com and lcf.org. We'll have both of those in the show notes on kidglov.com as well, if anybody wants to reference those again. Alec, this has been such a fun conversation. As we wrap up our time together today, what is the most important thing you would like our listeners to remember about the work that you are doing?

Alec Gorynski:

I think the most important thing to take away is that we can all make a difference. We can't feel like our contribution is too small, because every contribution, every expression of generosity, is meaningful and makes a difference. So that's one of the most important things that I think is important to take away.

Lyn Wineman:

That is fantastic. You know, Alec, I fully believe the world needs more people like you, more organizations like the Lincoln Community Foundation, more people like those who are going to give tomorrow at Give to Lincoln Day, right? So, thank you for taking time to share with us today.

Alec Gorynski:

I appreciate you having me today.

Announcer:

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