



### *Our Mission:*

*To Enhance, Enrich, Encourage, and Support the Defiance County Community*

## GIVE - SAVE - SPEND - It all started at the dinner table...

### Paying it Forward with Youth Philanthropy



Finn Tingle

Aileen Meyer

Trig Tingle

#### **Wouldn't it be neat to have a zip line at our school?**

This is how the conversation began with Finn and Trig Tingle with their parents over dinner. This initial conversation has grown into a youth philanthropy fund through The Defiance Area Foundation.

Finn and Trig Tingle, twin sons of Tisha Rau Tingle and Kevin Tingle, Defiance, were the impetus behind the fundraising for an approximate \$34,000 zip line to be constructed on the grades 3-5 playground at Defiance Elementary School.

"We watched 'American Ninja Warriors' and it inspired us to have a zip line at school," said Finn. They discussed the idea initially with their parents. Finn Tingle then asked for a meeting with their elementary principal, Deanne Held.

The next day she asked Finn to present to the PTO (and Trig asked to be part of the presentation). The Tingle Family then began their initiative seeking approval from the Defiance City School Board then started raising the funds through various fund-raisers.

The Defiance Area Foundation (DAF) awarded a \$10,000 capstone grant to the Ninja Warrior Playground Equipment project. The DAF also helped connect them to other donors. The remainder of the funds have since been donated by organizations and other funders to complete the equipment purchase and installation. The construction is slated for spring break.

The 9-year-olds and their parents then talked about how to pay it forward to the community.

"This inspired us to give back to the community," said Tisha. "Since the zip line was fully funded, we would like to give back to the community, and work with The Defiance Area Foundation and help the youth receive the same type of benefit. We bounced the idea around at home. What if we could do this (fundraise) and help other kids?"

So Finn and Trig donated their "give" piggy bank funds on Thursday (Valentine's Day) to a new youth philanthropy fund at the DAF. That gift totaled \$113.49. The financially savvy youngsters have three piggy banks — "save, give and spend" banks.

GIVE Piggy Bank \$113.49



“While the boys don’t get a regular allowance, they get paid to do certain jobs around the house. They also sell refreshments and fishing bait at the end of the driveway,” explained Tisha.

“When Tisha initially approached me with this idea, I was elated,” stated Christine Yoder, Executive Director of The Defiance Area Foundation. “We have been talking for years about a youth leadership and philanthropy program but with limited time and resources it never materialized. We are excited to be working with the Tingle Family to begin this process. Aileen Meyer and Sue Strausbaugh, DAF Development Committee Members, along with Michelle Osborne, are excited to be involved in implementing the new fund!”

“We want to inspire giving and encourage philanthropy,” stated Aileen Meyer. She referred to the boys as role models to other kids.

The new youth philanthropy fund already has a gift of \$2,000, in addition to the Tingle boys’ contribution. The goal is to raise \$10,000 for seed money, before grant-making begins, according to Christine Yoder, DAF director. The plan is to have youth on the committee as well. This fund will serve and benefit all of Defiance County.

The vision of our new fund, currently referred to as YEP, (Youth Engaged Philanthropy), is to empower and encourage the youth of our community to embrace their ideas for making the world a better place! By giving support to and mentoring the next generation, we will be preparing them for the great opportunities that no doubt lay ahead of them, but also as a whole, become better equipped and possess a changed perspective to create stronger communities!

To quote the children’s author, Kobe Yamaha in *What Do You Do With An Idea*,

“What do you do with an idea?...You change the world.”

Those wishing to help with the youth fund either financially or to serve on the Committee, can contact Yoder at 613 W. Third St., Defiance; [chris@defianceareafoundation.org](mailto:chris@defianceareafoundation.org); or 419-782-3130.

## Four pillars of Youth Philanthropy

- 1. SERVING:** Young people having a vision of what they want their community to be and acting upon their dreams is incredibly inspiring.
- 2. LEADING:** In high school, student council is at the top of everyone’s list for leadership opportunities. While student council is definitely a great stepping stone into the world of philanthropy, youth groups through community foundations and churches truly immerse young people in philanthropy and give them countless opportunities to be leaders in their communities.
- 3. ENGAGING:** Young people thrive on being heard and understood. There are three really easy ways to engage with young people while being both helpful and respectful. Involve youth in creation; giving youth responsibility and ownership within grant-making and planning processes gives them a better understanding of the impact they will be making on their community.
- 4. GIVING:** In my eyes, this is the most important pillar. Understanding the impact of your actions as a young person is incredibly valuable in your adult life. Youth philanthropists have a strong sense of the things worth giving: *time, talent, and treasures*. They understand the importance behind building relationships, facilitation skills, and personal giving. So remember, small acts of giving can make a big change!

Source: Taylor Dodson - Community Foundation of Greater Fort Wayne



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