

ABOUT THE PORGES FAMILY FOUNDATION



Norm (left) and Evan (right) Porges

The Porges Nonprofit Excellence Initiative is rooted in the values of its namesake: father and son Norm and Evan Porges. Those values include entrepreneurial thinking, curious and expansive leadership, never settling for status quo, and abiding generosity.

The Porgeses are known across the region for their entrepreneurship as the former owners of Prime Shine Car Wash, a successful business they operated for 28 years. As importantly, the Porges name is synonymous with generosity – Norm and Evan supported the community through hundreds of fundraisers while operating Prime Shine and then expanded their giving into major, multi-year gifts of nonprofits such as Gallo Center for the Arts, Memorial Hospital, CSU Stanislaus, Modesto Children's Museum, Center of Human Services, the State Theater, Modesto Symphony and many others.

Evan and Norm Porges evolved their giving to become more strategic with the establishment of the Porges Family Foundation in 2014 with the administrative support of Stanislaus Community Foundation. In the decade since of the founding of the Porges Family Foundation the family has been recognized as philanthropic exemplars, singular in their love for the region and for their support of nonprofit innovation, entrepreneurship and the arts.

Along with their support of hundreds of nonprofit programs over the years, Norm Porges was the inspiring, driving force behind the establishment of the Champions of the American Dream award and event in the mid-90's, a program that continues to this day. In 2021, the Porges family made a significant contribution to Stanislaus State to create the Warrior Entrepreneurship and Innovation Initiative, a multi-faceted program to provide mentorship, training and financial support to emerging entrepreneurs seeking to turn their business concepts to new ventures locally.

In 2020, as the pandemic disrupted local nonprofit operations, the Porges family stepped up to co-create and co-fund the RAD card program with the Downtown Modesto Partnership and other local donors. This innovative program provides matching philanthropic dollars for every consumer dollar spent at local downtown restaurants and retailers. The RAD card was so successful local county and city officials added more pandemic-relief dollars to sustain the program. At the same time, the Porges family partnered with Stanislaus Community Foundation to launch the Profit with Purpose program, an accelerated training for local nonprofits seeking to start social enterprises to diversify their revenue; both Evan and Norm personally served as business mentors to participating organizations and recruited many of their friends to do the same.

As the region emerged from the pandemic, the Porges family was an early and significant private contributor to the Stanislaus 2030 initiative, a ten-month economic development sprint to develop a new and more robust local economy, with a resulting Investment Blueprint to guide local and state investment dollars.

Evan and Norm Porges have also volunteered and served on the Boards of countless nonprofits, giving campaigns and community initiatives. In recognition of their unparalleled service, they have been the recipients of numerous awards, including the Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters, conferred by Stanislaus State in 2023. The family received the Carl Boyett Outstanding Philanthropist Award from the Association of Fundraising Professionals in 2020. In 2018 Norm Porges was named a Champion of the American Dream through Stanislaus State, and Evan Porges was named the 2023 Citizen of the Year by the American Legion Post 74.

Beyond the commitment to bettering their community and supporting local nonprofits, beyond the well-deserved accolades to celebrate their generosity, the Porges family name is woven into the fabric of the region for generations to come.

Often, a community prospers because a small group of forward-thinking families recognize that they have a duty and a service to invest back into their community. These families possess common traits: they are often self-made and incredibly entrepreneurial. They recognize that their fates are linked with those around them, and that they owe much of their success to the support of their residents. The Porges family exemplifies this generosity and abiding love and commitment to Stanislaus, both now and for decades to come.

In 2024, with the recognition that local nonprofits need capacity support as much as philanthropic gifts, the Porges Family created the Porges Nonprofit Excellence Initiative. The program, the first of its kind in the community and housed at Stanislaus Community Foundation, will include a number of offerings for organizations, including:

- Sabbatical fund for nonprofit executive directors
- Mid-level manager training program
- Succession planning support
- Finance and HR services support

