



Marie Groark joins the Schultz Family Foundation as director of Youth Initiatives

Friends and Colleagues:

The Schultz Family Foundation (SFF) has been focused on issues around social and economic mobility since 1996. Five years ago, Howard, Sheri and the SFF board decided to grow the foundation's resources and develop a team that would represent the Schultz family's values and work to have a measurable impact on the untenable opportunity divide in our country. Since then, the foundation has implemented two national strategies focused on empowering and realizing the potential of both Opportunity Youth and the Post 9/11 Veteran community. The foundation has seen significant progress through our partnerships, and we recognize that we need to expand our reach and impact to address the problem at scale.

To this end, I am thrilled to announce that Marie Groark will join SFF as the director of Youth Initiatives, effective August 21. Marie is uniquely qualified for this position. Her expertise in communications, philanthropy, systemic thinking, and her experience developing innovative models and scaling strategies, has grown out of her compassion for and true understanding of the young people we serve. As she pioneers this role, she will continue to build on the foundation's Opportunity Youth strategy and investment portfolio, and lead the foundation's efforts to impact millions of deserving and talented young people around the country.

I had the pleasure of working with Marie at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and more recently as an SFF grantee and partner in her current role as the executive director of Get Schooled, a national nonprofit that supports hundreds of thousands of low-income youth through its digital and text-based platforms. Get Schooled was founded through a partnership between the Gates Foundation and Viacom, and in 2017, was named a *Fast Company* Most Innovative Company for its use of gaming to engage its audience. Building Get Schooled with scale in mind, she and her team have been highly effective using media, influencers and technology favored by young people in order to support them through high school completion and into their next opportunity in post-secondary education and/or the workforce.

Marie started her career working with low-income youth, first at the New York District Attorney's Office and then in the Bronx as a high school teacher. After earning a Master's in Public Policy (MPP) from Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, she worked as a strategy consultant for PwC Consulting. She worked for almost eight years at the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation leading their early advocacy and communications work aimed to both elevate awareness of the nation's low high school graduation rates and later to improve postsecondary success rates.

Marie has devoted her career to finding effective, scalable solutions that harness the potential of young people. If I were to describe Marie's approach to strategy and partnerships in a few words, I'd use the terms innovation, servant leadership and authenticity.

Please join Sheri, Howard and the SFF team in welcoming Marie.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Daniel Pitasky".

Daniel Pitasky
executive director