

# QUARTERLY

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A publication for Gift of Adoption Investor Board members. Please pass along to others who may be interested in this cause. Send comments and feedback to [pcleverus@giftofadoption.org](mailto:pcleverus@giftofadoption.org)

## 1 2 3 4 news

*Gift of Adoption provides grants to complete the adoptions of vulnerable children - giving them a permanent family and the chance to thrive*

*GOA Board Members, John Tilson and David Knight, leverage a business opportunity to help five children join forever homes.*

Several Gift of Adoption board members recently leveraged their passion for the organization's mission to identify a unique, innovative way to provide for children in-need while pursuing a mutually beneficial business opportunity.

Their transaction resulted in a donation of more than \$15,000 and can serve as a model for other Gift of Adoption supporters to help vulnerable children unite with their families.

David Knight is a Principal at Advocate Commercial Real Estate Advisors, a brokerage firm that connects prestige clients with premium commercial space. David serves on both the Illinois Chapter Board, as well as on the Gift of Adoption Investor Board. Michael Webber, Advocate's Executive Vice President, is also on the Illinois Chapter Board.

While not involved with this transaction, Advocate's Managing Principal, Jim Berkemeier, serves as the Michigan Chapter Co-President.

John Tilson is a Partner at Brown, Gibbons, Lang & Co. (BGL) and a member of Gift of Adoption's National Board of Governors.

"Through some business development prospecting efforts, we uncovered that BGL was in need of some expansion space, so I went and met with John," Knight says.

BGL was searching for a larger location to expand its Chicago office. Advocate connected BGL with the

perfect property and worked with both BGL and the property owner to negotiate favorable lease terms.

Advocate earns compensation for its brokerage services through a commission from the property owners for whom it secures leases. Knight and Webber decided that they would donate 10 percent of their commission to Gift of Adoption.

"We decided that there was an opportunity for both companies to be able to contribute to Gift of Adoption through a mutually beneficial relationship," says Knight. "We structured it in a way that if there was an opportunity to work together and the transaction was completed, we would make that contribution to Gift of Adoption - knowing that this is a cause we all support."

### *Closing the Gap*

Introducing a mutually agreed-upon charitable cause allowed Advocate and BGL to bridge the transaction's terms.

"When two firms are working out the economics of a deal, sometimes there's a bit of a gap," Tilson says. "Introducing a charitable contribution can help both sides feel like they're winning. When there's a common charitable interest involved in a transaction, everyone comes out ahead. It's really a win-win-win."

Additionally, incorporating the contribution to Gift of Adoption in the deal helped both BGL and Advocate demonstrate the important role that corporate social responsibility plays at their organizations.

"While we're a financially driven enterprise, there are things that are bigger than that, too," Tilson says. "We want to make sure that we're having a

positive impact, as a firm, on both the environment and on our communities."

Their connection through Gift of Adoption allowed Advocate and BGL to identify a mutually beneficial business relationship that ended up providing Gift of Adoption with the funds necessary to help unite five children with their forever families.

"At the end of the day, [Tilson] was very happy that we were able to partner together," says Knight. "The idea of being able to use this deal to benefit a mutual passion of all of ours really struck home with him and with us."

Both Knight and Tilson say that exercising corporate social responsibility is an important value their respective companies. While they frequently make a point of committing company time and resources to charitable organizations, donating a percentage of their commission is an easy, direct way to benefit meaningful causes.

"It's a good way for us to give back," Knight says. "We tried to do it through our time in various areas. But, sometimes an economic benefit -- just writing a check -- is really well-received."

Knight says that Advocate plans to donate a percentage of its commission on all additional deals it earns through connections with Gift of Adoption supporters.

"I think it is a unique opportunity that certainly could be much more widespread," he adds. "I think there's a lot of corporations that would very much welcome this kind of concept."