

THE WOMEN'S FOUNDATION



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What do four tons of flour, 600 pounds of chocolate, and 3,000 pounds of butter used per day have to do with The Women's Foundation? Karen Trilevsky, founder of FullBloom Baking Co., turns a daily output of 20,000 hand-rolled croissants and 8,400 cookies into educational opportunities for immigrant youth. Trilevsky established the Smart Cookie Fund, a Donor Advised Fund at The Women's Foundation, to address these needs in her own community.

In addition to scholarships, the Smart Cookie Fund sends home laptop computers, provides extensive English, Spanish, math, and computer classes, and offers peer mentoring for junior high and high school-aged youth in need. *"These kids want to navigate the educational system; they just don't know how,"* Karen explained. *"Kids need a mentor who is close to their age who can intervene and say, 'Hey, you know, you're getting behind in math,' and help access resources."* She learned about educational needs in her community through her employees, many of whom are Mexican American immigrants with little or no English language skills. Through a partnership between Smart Cookie and Proyecto Orgullo at Cañada College, parents are learning how to be effective advocates for their children and taking classes in English as a second language.

Trilevsky knows what it's like to succeed despite humble origins: when she started baking in 1989, she had no oven of her own. Borrowing space at a local restaurant after closing and sleeping on sacks of flour after baking all night, she began what is now FullBloom Baking Co. The goal of the Smart Cookie Fund is to show young people that they have every right to dream big. *"They may believe that they're not supposed to succeed in life,"* Trilevsky notes. *"The Smart Cookie Fund is just a small part of breaking down these kinds of myths. I can't imagine why anyone would operate a business any other way."*



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