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Nominee’s area of expertise: Philanthropy

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Statement of Nomination:

The folks at the Bradley Foundation know better than anyone else what it takes to start a donor-advised fund. It would seem only fitting, then, to honor an individual who has built the most successful donor-advised fund -- indeed, the *only* donor-advised fund – devoted to channeling more charitable dollars to the cause of liberty.

Since it was founded 14 years ago with Whitney Ball at the helm, Donors Trust has secured some $784 million – over three-quarters of a billion dollars – to support the cause of liberty. Approximately $660 million of that has already been disbursed, the overwhelming majority of it to nonprofit organizations devoted to public policy.

In addition to providing a cost-effective way for donors to devote philanthropic resources to the kinds of causes the Bradley Foundation supports, Donors Trust has enabled donors to start and run projects under its auspices, and to pool funds for the purpose of undertaking collaborative projects. Through these vehicles, Donors Trust has dramatically expanded the resources available for legal challenges to an overreaching state, for example, as well as for research on higher education, fellowships for aspiring academics and journalists, and other initiatives that may never have been launched without Donors Trust to provide the institutional sponsorship.

Many a nonprofit organization expects to become self-supporting when started but few realize that objective. Donors Trust is an exception. For the past four years, it has covered its operating costs through fee income generated from its accounts. The fact that Whitney has accomplished this while fighting a recurrence of her breast cancer is only further testimony to her determination to increase the resources available for the advancement of America’s freedoms. For this I think she would be a deserving recipient of the Bradley Prize.