

New Evanston brewing company Sketchbook establishes philanthropy goal

A local brewing company donated 5 percent of its December sales, which totaled \$350, to the Evanston Community Foundation less than two months after the company's public opening.

Sketchbook Brewing Company, which [opened](#) in late November, decided to donate money to ECF, a foundation that distributes resources to local organizations. The brewery wanted to set up a regular tradition of philanthropy, Alice George, wife of co-owner Shawn Decker, said.

"I work in philanthropy and I've been working on the other side of the fence for a long time, trying to get companies to donate," she said. "Plenty are civic-minded, but some aren't."

The company, located at 825 Chicago Ave., exceeded expectations for its first month in business, selling 1,000 growlers (64-ounce jugs) and howlers (32-ounce jugs) combined. Their initial projections were around 700 to 800 total jugs, George said.

"It was amazing," she said. "It exceeded our expectations and we didn't really know what to expect."

George emailed Sara Schastok, the president and CEO of ECF, early in December about the donation. Sketchbook brewers gave back to Evanston because it was the Evanston community that allowed Sketchbook to thrive, George said.

"Evanston has welcomed us, right from the start, and we wanted to begin our philanthropic tradition with no delays," Decker said in a news release. "Our community is vital but also facing serious challenges, and we are proud to support the great work of the Foundation, even in a small way."

Schastok said she was pleased to see that Sketchbook recognized the foundation's community-oriented business.

"It's really exciting when an Evanston-based business really sees itself as the fabric of the community in this way," she said. "To start off its business being philanthropically active is exciting to us, and we applaud that."

Sketchbook plans to make annual contributions to the community, but George said she isn't sure the company can meet the amount they donated this month.

The funds Sketchbook donated will be added to the money ECF collects every year to support local grants and programs.

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