



Civic Work, Civic Lessons: Two Generations Reflect on Public Service

By Thomas Ehrlich, Ernestine Fu

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Civic Work, Civic Lessons explains how and why people of all ages, and particularly young people, should engage in public service as a vocation or avocation. Its authors are 57 years apart in age, but united in their passion for public service, which they term “civic work.” The book provides unique intergenerational perspectives. Thomas Ehrlich spent much of his career in the federal government. Ernestine Fu started a non-profit organization at an early age and then funded projects led by youth. Both have engaged in many other civic activities. An introductory chapter is followed by seven key lessons for success in civic work. Each lesson includes a section by each author. The sections by Ehrlich draw mainly from his experiences. Those by Fu draw on her civic work and that of many young volunteers whom the co-authors interviewed. The concluding chapter focuses on leveraging technologies for civic work. All profits received by the authors from the sale of this book will be donated to philanthropic organizations.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Thomas Ehrlich and Ernestine Fu transform their experiences, life lessons, and passion for civic engagement into a powerful blueprint for those looking to create meaningful and effective change. This book is a must read for both new and seasoned leaders alike." -- **Alan Khazei, Co-Founder of City Year and Vanessa Kirsch, Founder & Managing Director, New Profit Inc.**

"Tom Ehrlich has been such a thoughtful mentor and champion through my Teach For America journey and I'm so glad that he's partnered with an inspiring young leader, Ernestine Fu, to share the stories and lessons of a lifetime of public service." --**Wendy Kopp, Founder & Chair, Teach For America**

"Underneath the usual popular dissatisfaction with government and politicians, there is also an untapped sense of civic duty. From their unique vantage points – more than 57 years separates them in age – Thomas Ehrlich and Ernestine Fu point out key lessons they think are imperative for young people, and indeed, anyone who wants to make a difference. And they put the lessons in very engaging personal stories that you'll enjoy reading." --**David Mathews, President, Kettering Foundation**

"Wherever I go, I find that people want to make a positive contribution to their communities and their country – but do not know how. Now, two gifted authors, generations apart in age and experience, give people a valuable primer on how they can enrich their lives and the lives of others through public service." -- **Lee H. Hamilton, former United States Representative; Director, Center on Congress at Indiana University**

"Thomas Ehrlich and Ernestine Fu, from the standpoint of very different generations, share remarkable findings of how each of us can prepare to serve and then to realize enormous personal satisfaction in the new achievements and well-being of those touched by very thoughtful service." -- **Richard G. Lugar, former United States Senator**

"I am struck by the unique gift this book offers readers, two distinctly different yet equally valuable perspectives on public service. What a blessing for Ernestine Fu to be able to have Tom Ehrlich as a mentor, and how incredibly invigorating it must have been for Tom Ehrlich to work with Ernestine Fu, who seems destined to do great things." -- **John Merrow, PBS NewsHour and Learning Matters, Inc.**

"Through this inter-generational approach, Civic Work, Civic Lessons brings together two unique perspectives about remarkable experiences in public service. Tom Ehrlich and Ernestine Fu lead by example, demonstrating the value of civic engagement in the private and public sectors and challenging us to expand our personal civic efforts." - **Maureen Curley, Campus Compact**

"We can either inspire hope and optimism for the next generation by engaging them in the process to rebuild the public and private sector, or we can leave them behind. Tom Ehrlich and Ernestine Fu's honest discussion of so many difficult issues - sharing examples of failure and success - takes immense courage and vision to inspire greater good. I am inspired!" - **Kim Meredith, Center on Philanthropy and Civil Society at Stanford University**

"The Stanford community has a long history of public service. This book - written by members of two

different generations of the Stanford family, Tom Ehrlich, a faculty member, and Ernestine Fu, a student - is very much in our university's spirit. It explores the importance and relevance of service in its many forms and the benefits that come when generations reach out to each other. It offers valuable insights for tomorrow's leaders." -- **John Hennessy, President, Stanford University**

About the Author

Thomas Ehrlich has held a number of public-service positions since the administration of President John F. Kennedy. He was the first head of the Legal Services Corporation and was the director of the agency responsible for foreign-aid policy, reporting directly to President Carter. He has also served as president of Indiana University, provost of the University of Pennsylvania, and dean of Stanford Law School. He is author, co-author, or editor of fourteen books, including *Educating Citizen: Preparing America's Undergraduates for Lives of Moral and Civic Responsibility* (2003), and *Educating for Democracy: Preparing Undergraduates for Responsible Political Engagement* (2007). He holds five honorary degrees and is a member of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences.

Ernestine Fu is an undergraduate student at Stanford, where she has been admitted to the Master's and PhD programs in engineering. She has been engaged in civic work since she was fifteen when she founded a nonprofit organization to bring music to those in need. She has served on a national corporate advisory board to fund youth civic activities. She has also worked at a venture capital firm emphasizing investments in high-tech Silicon Valley start-ups. She was chosen for the Kauffman Fellowship on entrepreneurship and is an active supporter of social entrepreneurs.

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