It's about teaching as much as giving.

The Roberts family has a long history in the Springfield business community through their family business, Standard Mutual Insurance Company, and a tradition of supporting local philanthropic efforts. The desire to maintain that tradition in future generations led the family to establish the Roberts Family Fund through the Community Foundation for the Land of Lincoln.

“We feel that the fund is a great opportunity to honor family members that always stressed the importance of giving back while at the same time educating younger family members about the importance of philanthropy,” Mark Roberts III said. “By creating the Roberts Family Fund, it allows for a very organized process with great flexibility for the family’s giving strategy.”

The move into a donor-advised fund through the Community Foundation had been discussed by the family for a few years. The family is familiar with many people associated with the Foundation and felt it provides an excellent base from which to launch local philanthropy.

“We have been extremely impressed with the Community Foundation from the leadership, staff and board of directors. We feel that the Foundation provided the perfect opportunity to establish a charitable fund,” Roberts said.

In the past the family has been active in the American Red Cross. Both Mark Roberts Jr. and Mark Roberts III have served on the organization’s local board. However, the family fund does not have a specific target charity. The flexibility is a tremendous asset of the donor-advised fund.

The decision-making will be a family process overseen by Mark Roberts Jr. and Mark Roberts III. The process will be utilized in part to help teach the younger generation about charitable giving. “This will be a group decision-making process with all family members all the way down to the grandchildren,” Roberts said.

It’s a process the family hopes will play out across many decades. “The long-term goal for the fund is to make sure that we have a perpetual giving plan for future generations to come,” Roberts said.