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Publishing Veteran Gretchen Young Launching Regalo Press at Post Hill Press

By Emell Derra Adolphus | Sep 28, 2022

Publishing veteran Gretchen Young is ready to begin a new chapter in her decades-long career. In a statement released on September 28, Post Hill Press publisher Anthony Ziccardi announced that Young will be launching a new standalone imprint at the company called Regalo Press. The imprint will be distributed by Simon & Schuster, as are books from other imprints from Post Hill Press.

“Throughout her career, Gretchen has published award winners and scores of New York Times bestsellers,” said Ziccardi. Young’s “eye for books that resonate with readers” will be crucial to developing works under the imprint’s broad genre focus, including such topics as fiction, biography, memoir, social justice and female empowerment, Ziccardi said, adding: “I’m honored that Gretchen has decided to create this extraordinary new imprint at Post Hill Press.”



Courtesy Post Hill Press

Gretchen Young

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For Young, the imprint is an opportunity to publish great books and give back. Integrating philanthropy into the book publishing business, Regalo will donate a portion *beyond the author’s book advance* to a charity of the author’s choice at the acquisition stage. The donation will be completed when the book is ready to publish.

“It is our aim to inspire others to give by showing that it can be integrated into the way any industry functions, and to propel our operations toward this end without ever sacrificing the quality of what we publish,” Young said, in a statement about her new career path. “Our guiding principle is that the only thing better than creating a great book is harnessing that greatness in the service of others.”

Young spent the last 10 years as v-p and executive editor at Grand Central Publishing, editing books by a range of authors, including Caroline Kennedy, Pulitzer prize winning writer Oscar Hijuelos, theater giant Kenny Leon, civil rights leader John Lewis.

Young spoke with *PW* about how she plans to bring her award-winning publishing formula to Regalo to make the imprint a success.

At this juncture in your career, why was Post Hill Press a good fit for your next step? Considering your decorated background of successful titles, what do you hope to bring to this new imprint?

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I have known Anthony Ziccardi for a long time. We worked together at HarperCollins in the '90s, which was my first publishing job. I have always admired Anthony's entrepreneurial spirit and energy—he's innovative, takes chances, and I've watched Post Hill Press grow steadily over the years as a publisher of all different genres. Also, I have wanted to create a publishing business model with a charitable component for some time now. Anthony was

immediately receptive to the idea and gave me the platform—and the operational flexibility—to make it a reality. Publishing great books and doing good, that's the Regalo Press mission, and Anthony shares that vision with me.

This imprint sounds like an exciting venture, with each title benefiting a charity or cause close to the author. Could you tell me what the first title published under the imprint will be? What subject will it focus on?

Prior to this article you're writing, no one knows where I have landed, so these first books are just now taking form. I do have several in the early stages of being lined up, including two really special memoirs, a unique self-help title, and a pop culture-based title. Like all Regalo Press books, a donation will be made to a cause or charity of the author's choice, and these donations do not come out of the author's advance but rather from the imprint itself. Of course, we hope our authors will also voluntarily contribute, but we lead the way.

Post Hill Press has a tradition of publishing titles that are focused on conservative subjects. How will this imprint differ in tone and focus compared to what is published under Post Hill?

Regalo Press is not a conservative-focused publisher. We will choose books based on the same criteria I have used throughout my career in the industry. We are looking for well-written, engaging books by people with stories to tell that are interesting, or important, or humorous, or moving. I have published books by individuals from all over the political spectrum, but for the most part I have also avoided overtly political titles—they're just not my thing. If you look holistically at Post Hill's various imprints, you can see they do publish across all categories—just like a Big 5 publisher—and Regalo will be the latest standalone imprint under the Post Hill umbrella.

The name 'Regalo' suggests a focus on a Spanish-speaking audience. Considering your master's in Spanish language, did this have an influence on the imprint's focus?

I chose Regalo because I wanted a word that was both lyrical and suggestive of the imprint's mission. Regalo means "gift" in both Italian and Spanish. I am part Italian, and I am also a lifelong student of Spanish literature. Regalo is not aimed at any one ethnic group or demographic. The imprint will be broadly focused and we will embrace any title that meets our criteria.

In your role, how will you measure success beyond sales?

The first metric will be how well received our books are, and the second will be how much impact did the book have on the charity or cause involved—not just in terms of the donation but also how much the book raised awareness that could potentially lead to additional charitable support. Let's face it, we all hope to have national bestselling books. But I honestly believe that giving back is just good business, and I will consider Regalo Press a huge success if it helps prove that theory correct.

A 'growing embrace of social responsibility in the corporate realm' is being felt across all industries, especially when it comes to communications platforms and mediums such as books, you said. Considering the wide impact publishing has on spreading ideas, what duty do you feel publishers have to help shape the 'ethical framework' in the service of others?

My answer is twofold. First, publishing's impact on spreading ideas is, as you say, enormous, and even though other media have now taken the lead in shaping public opinion, book publishing is still the best source of in depth information sharing—the last bastion, if you will, of ideas presented with the necessary context and background. I think this dovetails with the Regalo Press mission because the better we understand the true state of the world around us, the better able we are to see what needs fixing and to appreciate the importance of charity. Secondly, I

think traditionally publishers have had to focus on the industry's narrow profit margin, so the possibility of incorporating charity into the business model was just never considered—until now. It is my hope that Regalo Press will not only benefit important charities and causes across the globe, but also that the success of our model will help establish a new normal in book publishing and contribute to a positive feedback loop with readers that promotes charity by example.