



COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
OF GREATER BIRMINGHAM

GIVING TOGETHER

TOGETHER WE PROSPER

This June, the Community Foundation released the results of a yearlong research project highlighting opportunities for greater regional cooperation across Jefferson County. The research, conducted by the Public Affairs Research Council of Alabama, shows the connection between regional cooperation and a metro area's prosperity. The report also examines how other metro areas have found ways to work together to address regional needs.

"The results are clear: When there is more cooperation in a metro area, there is more growth in jobs, incomes, and overall prosperity," said Christopher Nanni, President and CEO of the Community Foundation. "While there are different styles and degrees of cooperation, communities benefit when they speak with one voice and unite behind a common purpose or goal."

The report looks at four different models of cooperation adopted in Charlotte, Denver, Louisville and Pittsburgh. While it examines the pros and cons of the alternatives, the report does not advocate a particular solution for Birmingham. "This report is about making it easier for our region to take on large scale projects that have languished under a system that fosters

competition over cooperation," Nanni said. "Our goal was not to dictate the solution, but to provide the facts and stimulate a conversation." To help guide the project, the Community Foundation established a strategic advisory committee that represents diverse segments of Jefferson County.

The Community Foundation also commissioned a poll to explore Jefferson County residents' views on cooperation. It indicated an overwhelming majority of Jefferson County residents would support greater cooperation to provide services and set regional priorities. Millennials consistently expressed the strongest support for cooperation, but backing was solid across all respondents regardless of age, gender, race, income level and residence.

Importantly, the report demonstrates that local governments can maintain their identity and autonomy and still improve cooperation. "Cooperation is not the same thing as consolidation," Nanni said. "Cooperation simply means recognizing that we have a shared fate and working together toward a future that will be more prosperous for all."

Since the report has been released, the Community Foundation has presented the results to numerous groups including:

Rotary Club of Birmingham, the Mayors Association, Birmingham Business Alliance and Rotaract Club of Birmingham, and more presentations are scheduled. The goal is to encourage public discussion about cooperation in the hopes that champions and a consensus will emerge about steps to be taken to foster cooperation in our community.



Regional Cooperation presentation at Birmingham Rotaract

2017 / VOL. THREE

SAVE THE DATE

Don't miss these upcoming events at the Community Foundation:

Regional Cooperation

Lunch and Conversation
Thursday, August 24 11:30am to 1pm

Introduction to the Community Foundation

Lunch and Learn
Monday, August 21 11:30am to 1pm

Innovation Economy

Lunch and Panel Discussion
Thursday, September 14
11:30am to 1pm

To RSVP contact:
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Read the report: www.TogetherWeProsper.org

CULTIVATING PHILANTHROPY

What happens when you take a group of active eighth-graders, give them some power tools, lumber and a really good STEM program? At Putnam Middle School you end up with a pretty cool greenhouse for their Farm Lab outdoor classroom.

Last September, the Birmingham Change Fund (BCF), a fund at the Community Foundation, opened up a collaborative grant opportunity for the design and implementation of a Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) program to help students develop academically and personally.

BCF is a giving circle of 24 young, dynamic African American professionals who are focused on the power of collective philanthropy. "Our members wanted to do more than give, they wanted to make effective investments through strategic philanthropy," says Shon Thurman, president of BCF. Members include attorneys, entrepreneurs, executives, engineers and accountants, among other professions. For these fund

members it's not just about giving dollars, they also volunteer an impressive amount of their time and talent to the community.

In 2009, BCF focused their grantmaking on education, with a goal of addressing achievement and participation gaps that exist among students of color in the Birmingham City Schools. Since their inception, the fund has awarded more than \$60,000 in grants to area nonprofits.

Their most recent grant was awarded to Jones Valley Teaching Farm in collaboration with Putnam Middle School. Jones Valley had established a Good School Food program with Putnam that included the development of a teaching farm that includes raised beds, a pond, a cistern, a compost pile, a bee hotel and even a student "victory garden". The grant from BCF allowed them to build a greenhouse.

The ambitious year-long project tied together numerous disciplines that go into constructing a building, including science, math and engineering. The National

Society of Black Engineers of Birmingham and several architects stepped forward to assist the students, and become mentors.

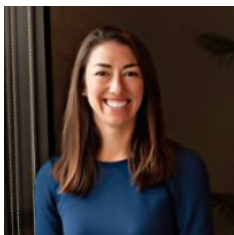
"We assisted with the ribbon cutting this May," said Thurman. "Seeing the student's excitement and knowing that we have helped cultivate a joy for learning through this grant – that is why we are a part of BCF."



BCF'S MODEL FOR COLLECTIVE PHILANTHROPY HAS WON NATIONAL RECOGNITION. MEMBERS OF THEIR BOARD AND GRANTS COMMITTEE HAVE SPOKEN AT CONFERENCES ALL OVER THE COUNTRY TO FOUNDATIONS THAT WANT TO ENGAGE DONORS FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS.

WELCOME NICOLE CARPENTER!

Nicole Carpenter will join the Community Foundation on August 1 as Director of Donor Stewardship. She most



recently served as a Consultant at Clarus Consulting Group and has worked in development and communications at the University of Oxford and

UAB, policy advocacy and regulatory affairs in Washington, D.C., and non-profit programming and strategy in Birmingham.

Nicole holds a MSc in Organizational and Social Psychology from The London School of Economics and Political Science and a BA in History of Art from Vanderbilt University.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT GIVING TOGETHER OR TO PARTICIPATE IN A SITE VISIT, CONTACT SARAH EDWARDS AT 205.327.3827

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