

MEMORANDUM

To: CFGB Building Capacity Committee
From: Gus Heard-Hughes, Vice President, Programs
Date: April 5, 2022
Re: Outlying County Funds

Background:

In January 2015, the Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham (CFGB) established three endowed field of interest funds for outlying counties: the Fund for St. Clair County, the Fund for Blount County, and the Fund for Shelby County. (CFGB did not establish a fund in Walker County because that county has its own community foundation and greater capacity; we do still make competitive and proactive grants in alignment with the Walker Area Community Foundation.) The purpose of these funds was to establish a platform to engage local leaders in those counties and grow resources for long-term support of organizations and programs serving those counties. Although CFGB has done fairly regular outreach in each of these counties (outside the COVID crisis interruption), seven years in, all three funds remain small (just over \$16,000 in the Fund for St. Clair County, just under \$12,000 in the Fund for Shelby County, and just over \$700 in the Fund for Blount County).

As we embark on a fresh round of outreach in these counties, we believe that CFGB should take a step further to show our commitment to these communities and inspire local leaders to match local giving to grow these funds. A one-time infusion of proactive funds into these three funds will provide a jumping off point for building deeper partnerships and engaging current and future donors from these counties. It will also provide capacity for some targeted grantmaking in these counties in the near future.

Recommendation:

CFGB staff recommends allocating \$50,000 to each of the three outlying county funds (the Fund for St. Clair County, the Fund for Blount County, and the Fund for Shelby County) from CFGB proactive dollars to inspire and challenge local leaders and donors from those counties and to provide some targeted grantmaking capacity for each of these counties.