

the giving life



Formerly incarcerated women have a voice through Women on the Rise [See page 6](#)



INSIDE:

- Renters unite with Sandy Springs Together
- Equity is the light that shines in the darkness
- Charitable IRAs and you

President's Message



We don't want a "new normal" – we want a "better normal."

Inside:

A **McNair High School student idea** is fueling better virtual education strategies **p3**

Through Sandy Springs Together, David and Melanie Couchman are ensuring that all of their neighbors have a voice **p4**

Marilynn Winn's life's work has become ensuring that formerly incarcerated women have a voice through Women on the Rise **p6**

What shape that better normal takes is different for everyone. To me, it's a normal that works better for everyone – you and me, and all of our residents in the metro Atlanta region, especially our Black and Latinx neighbors.

So, how do we figure out what that collective normal should be? Well, it's no surprise to anyone who knows me that I think data is critical. I also think we need deliberative thinking and real dialogue to shape it. That means being inclusive and making sure we have ALL of the people at the table, especially those whose voices historically have not been heard or had a seat at the table.

Those voices will be key as we lay the groundwork for a new five-year strategic plan (learn more about our vision on page 11) that focuses on our north star of equity. Hearing from all voices about what our community needs and wants from us will be crucial. As a foundation that serves our community, we cannot evolve in a bubble. Much of this year will be spent gathering input and ideas from our stakeholders – donors like you, as well as civic and community leaders, our nonprofit partners, other philanthropic institutions and more.

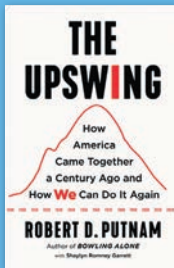
The time is now for a new, more equitable society. Will you join me at the table? Have a seat.

Yours in service,

Frank Fernandez
President & CEO

Join philanthropists across the country for these two conversations! Visit cfgreateratlanta.org/digital-events.

Authors Bob Putnam and Shaylyn Romney Garrett discuss *The Upswing: How America Came Together a Century Ago and How We Can Do It Again* Wednesday, April 21, noon – 1:30 p.m.



Author Heather McGhee discusses *The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone and How We Can Prosper Together* Tuesday, May 25, 12:30 – 2 p.m.

Student voices shape educational strategy

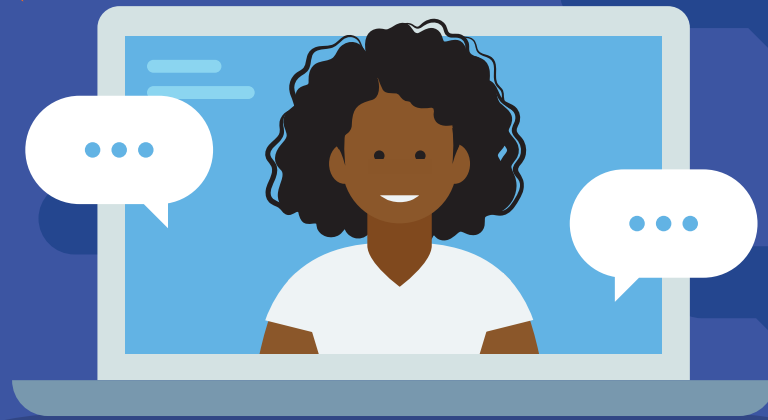
Junior Achievement of Georgia's 3DE program meets students where they are – in the classroom. It connects educational concepts to real-world experiences to heighten students' appreciation for academics and fuel long-term career aspirations. Each year, the culmination of the program is a capstone project, which gives the students real experiences interacting with real businesses.

This year, the Community Foundation had the opportunity to serve as the first ever nonprofit capstone partner for ninth grade students at Dr. Ronald E. McNair High School in DeKalb County. The theme for this project was collaboration, and our Prosperous People team members were especially excited because this project would allow students to have direct input into our educational funding strategy by sharing their ideas, rather than adults making decisions for them.

Several fantastic ideas were put forth, but the "winning" project speaks to the current struggle that students are facing during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Wanda Charles-Henley, the students' technology and business teacher, was elated. "Especially during a hybrid learning environment, there is a real need. I still have students that struggle to log in. Teachers are learning platforms often as we roll them out to our students. I was so excited by the solution that they proposed."

In a continuation of the collaborative theme, our Prosperous People team has launched a new initiative in partnership with local nonprofit organizations to improve equitable education learning models post-COVID-19. The learning institute proposed by McNair High School students was one of the ideas brought to the table, giving it an opportunity to be implemented in the real world.



The students proposed a virtual learning institute that includes separate technology tutorials for parents, teachers and students (by grade level) that helps them all better navigate and optimize the learning platforms.

"This program makes the classroom come to life. It makes a connection between what I teach and what students' interests are. In a virtual environment it keeps the kids excited and the wheels start turning."

– Wanda Charles-Henley, business and technology teacher at Dr. Ronald E. McNair High School

Sandy Springs Together: Working to ensure all neighbors have a voice



"Throughout our lives, Melanie and I have both had people help us. Now we want to help our neighbors become aware of the city's plans for redevelopment, so that they can offer their thoughts and ideas about those plans."

- David Couchman

Melanie and David Couchman love Sandy Springs. They see it as a place rich with potential. Unfortunately, it is also a place where housing affordable for all income levels is becoming scarce, creating problems for employers, public schools and residents.

After a stint on a task force to study the redevelopment of the north end of Sandy Springs, the Couchmans were concerned by the lack of inclusion in decision-making. In one area that has 10,000 apartments in a three-mile stretch, a potential redevelopment would have pushed out nearly 20,000 residents – including nurses, teachers and police officers – but no apartment residents were represented on the task force member-

ship. "This section is one of our richest areas of diversity," said Melanie Couchman. "Such a redevelopment effort would likely have displaced many residents, dramatically changing the cultural, racial and ethnic make-up of the city."

So, they rolled up their sleeves and got to work. Formed in 2019 as an extension of their small private foundation, the Couchman Noble Foundation, Sandy Springs Together seeks to amplify the voices of all residents to ensure thoughtful and inclusive land use and revitalization. The non-partisan project partners with resident leaders, offers leadership training and resources, and works to educate the community through research and active digital communications.

Working together: Renters united

In her "day job," Dr. Melody Kelley is a teacher. She also works with Sandy Springs Together as a resident organizer. For her, it's personal – she calls a Sandy Springs apartment community home. The group of residents she works with have negotiated a 100% increase in the community pest control budget, a remodeled laundry room and upgrades to trash maintenance. The community has even added a dog park!

"As an organizer, I am motivated by one ideal - you don't have to be the leader in order to be a leader. When we use our collective voices, we become more than tenants, we become co-creators in our neighborhood and in the broader community."

→ Learn more at sandyspringstogether.org



With the support of Sandy Springs Together, The North River Resident Alliance has been successful in negotiating several community improvements.



"We look forward to many of the trails and parks that the city is proposing – we simply seek to include the voices of those residents who are often overlooked to ensure that all improvements also create or preserve housing affordability for families of all income levels so that they put down roots here, regardless of whether they rent or buy."

- Melanie Couchman

Marilynn Winn’s life’s work:
Ensuring that formerly incarcerated women of color have a voice

Marilynn Winn thinks big. When she created a nonprofit organization in 2012, she knew the name had to have scale and Women on the Rise was born. Winn has devoted herself to ensuring that formerly incarcerated women of color have a voice. In the early days of her organization, that meant a key role in the “ban the box” advocacy efforts to remove questions from hiring applications that ask if applicants have a criminal record. The City of Atlanta was the first in the south to adopt the policy. After its adoption, Women on the Rise also helped to figure out how to implement it and other non-discriminatory measures.

For Winn, this is personal. She knows how a mistake can impact your future. She recalls trying to figure out how to tell her peers during a round of volunteer board service that she was formerly incarcerated – that she was like the very people they were trying to help. She says that lived experience is one of her biggest strengths now. She knows how to look at the “whole person.”

The programming at Women on the Rise includes everything from support groups to

welcome home packages for those who have recently been released, but Winn can see her next big goal right outside her office window. Women on the Rise is leading the campaign to close and repurpose the Atlanta City Detention Center, known as ACDC, into a Center for Wellness, Equity and Freedom.

The jail’s population has gone from 700 a night to just 19 to 30, partially through the grassroots organizing of Women on the Rise and other partner organizations. Winn calls efforts like mental health services and modifications to policies that put people in jail for traffic violations “starving the beast,” as they divert those with lesser offenses away from the jail. There is still a long way to go, although Winn has worked with abolitionist architects Designing Justice Designing Spaces, who have completed a final report with a rendering of the new Center for Wellness, Equity and Freedom.

Winn knows they will get there. After all, she thinks big. “I’ve never closed a jail before,” Winn says, “but I’m determined to make a change.”

“I have lived this. I have experienced the barriers, the hardship and the heartbreak. I overcame them.”

—Marilynn Winn, Co-founder and executive director, Women On The Rise



Women on the Rise also focuses on grassroots organizing and legislation reform.

→ **Learn more at**
womenontherisega.org

Lifecycle Building Center: Bringing impact through surplus building materials

Community Foundation donor Tyler Edgarton began his affiliation with Lifecycle Building Center (LBC) through a bit of serendipity. In 2014 when he learned that a film production tenant of his commercial real estate firm was planning to send building material from their sets to the landfill, he asked for a few days to come up with an alternative solution. Through his network he learned about LBC, a nonprofit that takes donations of building materials, appliances and home furnishings and redistributes them to primarily lower-income residents and nonprofits through its Reuse Center, located between Adair Park and West End. Since 2011, LBC's Nonprofit Material MATCH program has donated free materials to over 200 nonprofits, and awareness about this community resource is growing. That first film-set donation Edgarton facilitated salvaged roughly 25 tons of lumber alone, and he says that re-purposing materials has now become much more common among production companies.

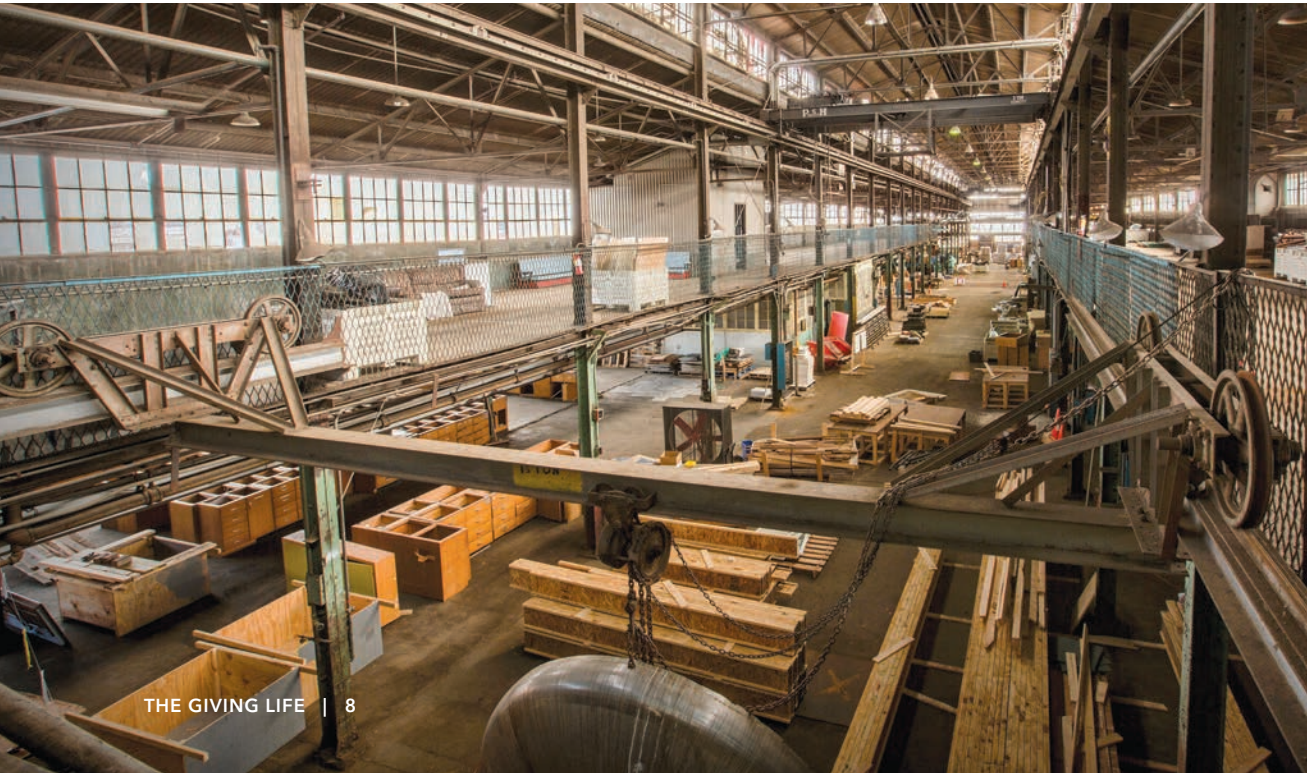
Edgarton has become a strong advocate for LBC's mission and has served on its Board for five years, helping to lead the organization through a capital campaign that has allowed LBC to purchase and begin renovating its own building in Southwest Atlanta. "LBC uses solid business practices like tracking sales data to determine what sells best and targeting donations to those items," Edgarton said.

"Being even a small part of helping LBC grow into a strong nonprofit that's making an impact in our region has been a great fit with my own personal commitment to sustainability and community impact."

- Tyler Edgarton, Community Foundation donor

"Building materials with decades of useful life left are routinely discarded because people don't realize they can be saved or how much positive impact they can have. Once people understand this, they can stop seeing these materials as 'waste' and start seeing them as a tremendously valuable resource."

- Shannon Goodman, executive director, LBC



Family honors matriarch's legacy through charitable IRA

Dr. Jay Steinberg is honoring his mother's legacy thanks to a charitable IRA with the Community Foundation. In 2003 Dr. Muriel Steinberg designated the Community Foundation as beneficiary for her IRA; she passed away at age 100 in 2020. She was a trailblazer when she graduated from medical school in Nebraska in the 1940s. In her lifetime, she supported women's causes, healthcare and the environment. Steinberg, the Chief Medical Officer at Emory University Hospital Midtown, aims to honor those causes and also be flexible to support emerging needs of the time, which includes a recent gift to the Atlanta Community Food Bank to support those facing hunger during the COVID-19 pandemic. "My mother was philanthropic during her life and had many causes she cared about," Steinberg said. "I want to put this fund to work to fulfill her legacy and work with my own children to support causes important to them, continuing a family tradition of philanthropy."



Family members with Dr. Muriel Steinberg, 2020

Everything you want to know about charitable IRAs

Did you know that your Individual Retirement Account (IRA) could be one of the most heavily taxed assets in your estate? Depending upon whom you leave it to, 60-70% or more of your IRA might be lost to taxes.

Instead, consider using your IRA to fuel your philanthropic goals and put 100% of the amount to charitable purposes (use other, less-taxed assets such as cash, stock and real estate to provide for loved ones).

Your final IRA gift to the Community Foundation can enhance your donor-advised fund for the next family generation, establish a permanent legacy fund, or help meet immediate community needs through a Foundation fund.

Note: these same considerations apply to other retirement funds assets as well, e.g., 401(k) and 403(b) plans.

Join others in making an end-of-life IRA gift

Simply name the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta as a beneficiary of your IRA.

When you pass away, some or all of the IRA funds pass to the Foundation. In addition to its tax-savvy nature, this way of giving offers other advantages:

- There is no change in your lifestyle
- The funds remain under your control should you need them during your lifetime
- You can give a little or a lot - you decide the percentage division of your IRA
- The percentage can be changed or revoked entirely if life changes
- You direct how the gift is to be used

For more information about this type of gift, please contact Alison O'Carroll, JD, MBA, at 404.333.0241 or aocarroll@cfgreateratlanta.org.

To arrange the gift: simply complete a new beneficiary designation form (often can be done online at your convenience), naming: "Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta, Inc., EIN# 58-1344646" as one or the sole primary or secondary beneficiary.

Equity: The light that shines in the darkness

by Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta President, Frank Fernandez

2020 ...truly a year like no other. COVID-19. George Floyd. Great Division. And, The Year of Equity. The struggle for equity is not new. It is a centennial American struggle. Mayors, corporate CEOs and fellow civic leaders have started to beat

the drum about the need to promote equity in their communities. Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms has made it a central pillar of her administration's focus and aspiration for Atlanta since taking office. For those of us who have worked on "equity" issues for many years, this newfound zeal is welcome

and long overdue. Now that the conversation has started, we have a responsibility to be intentional and thoughtful about not only what we mean by "equity", but how we talk about it and what our actions demonstrate.

Equity is about fairness. It is concerned with ensuring that each of us has a fair shot at a decent life. The ways in which we, as individuals, are defined have become proxies for disadvantage – and oppression.

2020 has forced us to see these hard, harsh truths. We cannot un-see them. The bigger question for us, collectively and moving forward, is what do we do now?

At the Community Foundation, we believe equity demands that we build a region that supports, as much as is reasonably possible, every individual getting what they deserve and need. That is the tenet upon which America was founded, and that is the right, just and equitable thing to do.

If you are interested in this topic, visit cfdgreateratlanta.org/lightthatshines to read Community Foundation president Frank Fernandez' complete opinion piece of the same title, first published in the Atlanta Business Chronicle on December 18, 2020.

Artwork by Atlanta artist Neka King, nekkaa.com

Meet our amazing new Board members!



1 Ron Alston, Truist Financial, is a veteran banker with deep experience in the corporate, government and nonprofit sectors.

2 David Cummings, Atlanta Tech Village, is a tech entrepreneur who has created 10 companies generating thousands of jobs.

3 Fran Gary, Blue Cross Blue Shield, leads government markets for the healthcare provider, overseeing all government market segments including Medicare, the Federal Employee Plan (FEP) and the Healthy Blue offering.

4 David Roemer, Ideas United, is a creative visionary changing the way stories are told and incubating young, creative talent to boost brands.

5 Jewel Burks Solomon, Google, is leveling the playing field for underrepresented entrepreneurs through funding and technology that connects products, people and platforms.

6 Kelli Stewart, L.E.A.D., is a nonprofit executive using the platform of baseball to drive young men to success on the field and off through education and community leadership/engagement/influence.

7 Ryan Wilson, The Gathering Spot, is building local hubs where creatives, business professionals and entrepreneurs connect for notable and culturally impactful events.

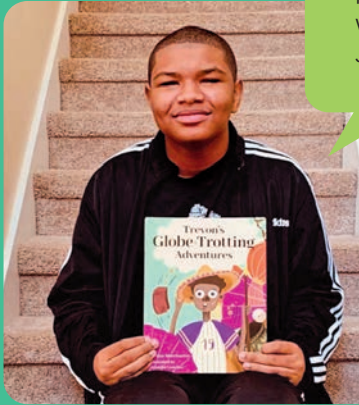
To learn more about our Board leadership team, visit cfdgreateratlanta.org/about/board-of-directors/.

Guided by our north star of equity: Building our 2022-26 strategic plan

We celebrate our 70th anniversary this year with an eye toward the future. The challenges we face today call upon us to reimagine the role our region's community foundation plays in the life and vitality of metropolitan Atlanta. We must be bold and we must be inclusive in all that we do.

Guided by our north star of equity, our Board and staff will engage the civic partners, community leaders, donors, nonprofit organizations and students we serve to help determine how best to fulfill our mission to increase the well-being and prosperity of all residents who call our region home.

Young Author's Publishing printed 3,000 copies of books written by young authors, like Jordan, to distribute globally.



The shelter manager at PAWS Atlanta uses her new laptop as she oversees animal care and shelter operations.



thank you

Thanks to you, our donors, fulfilled "wishes" from our fall 2020 Extra Wish catalog are making an impact on our community!

A Georgia Conservancy team member is able to work safely and remotely on her new laptop as she protects and conserves Georgia's natural resources.



Tommy Nobis Center provides program participants with a lunchbox fully stocked with essential PPE and personal care items, helping them to be their best (and safe) selves on the job.



Agape provided \$100 Publix gift cards for holiday meals to 100 families suffering from food insecurity because of the COVID-19 pandemic.



Can't wait for the next Extra Wish catalog? Contact your philanthropic officer for current grant opportunities.