

What will it take to make the ATL strong? Or is the question, who?

“Philanthropy is commendable but it must not cause the philanthropist to overlook the circumstances of economic injustice which make philanthropy necessary.” Martin Luther King Jr.’s words resonate as we grapple with how to use our philanthropic mandate to fight the economic and racial injustice laid bare by COVID-19. It’s clear that Atlanta, and America, have a new destiny ahead. One that we want to be a part of.

This report highlights 2019, the stories of what we accomplished with our valued partners. Yet, as we stand here in these last days of June 2020, we must acknowledge the moment we are in. We affirm our awareness of the inequities and injustices brought by systemic racism in our communities. We recognize that COVID-19 has had a more serious impact on our Black and Brown neighbors. We must be accountable to these underserved communities.

To that end, as a Board and staff and via events we held with you, we have been on a multi-year journey to reveal and understand the deep inequity in our region. As the region’s endowment, we crafted an equity of opportunity architecture to inform our daily work. In 2019 with our Board’s support, we committed to a mission with equity for all at its core that will transform our practices and processes.

A catalyst for the Foundation’s 2019-2021 strategic plan was the CEO transition taking place in 2020. In the last 43 years, we’ve worked together to create an indelible philanthropic mark. That legacy includes galvanizing responses to Atlanta’s early HIV/AIDS crisis, securing Martin Luther King Jr’s papers as a permanent fixture in Atlanta and helping nonprofits weather the storm during periods of economic turmoil.

That ability to act swiftly catalyzed in March when the reality of COVID-19 brought our region to a halt. We immediately brought together trusted partners, and with the United Way of Greater Atlanta opened the [Greater Atlanta COVID-19 Response and Recovery Fund](#). Private and family foundations, corporations and countless individuals like you have given over \$22 million to this Fund. Since inception, \$17.3 million has been granted to 320 nonprofits for financial assistance, food, healthcare, education, small business supports, housing and childcare. Our region continues to experience even deeper disparities along racial lines and we vow to be an active partner.

This we do know: We want EVERYONE in Atlanta to thrive. And it’s up to all of us to make it stronger. How can you partner with us in this work? As you read and reflect, we hope you view the seasons of 2019 through the lens of today. We know the stakes are high. Time is short. The decisions we make now determine our tomorrow – and beyond.

With gratitude for your service to the region,



Alicia Philipp
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President & CEO



Susan Grant
Susan Grant
Board Chair