



MOVING ATL

2023 ANNUAL REPORT

The movement to create
a better Atlanta for all





MOVING **ATL** FWARD

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a better Atlanta for all



LETTER FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR AND PRESIDENT

What does it mean to work together? To create impact together? To make a neighbor feel they are part of something bigger than themselves? We ask ourselves these questions as we look back, and ahead, at the opportunity to create meaningful impact for our city, our region and the place we affectionately call home... together.

2023 was year two of our five-year strategic plan, TogetherATL, which promises to use the Foundation's capital—social, moral, intellectual, relational and financial—to create a more equitable and prosperous Atlanta. We reengaged in activities that promote moving Atlanta forward.

Atlanta is in an affordable housing crisis. Home is more than a place, it is the wellspring for safety, stability, education and health. Our commitment to building or preserving 5,000 units is well on its way, with over \$16.1M deployed as of year-end 2023 to support more than 1,100 affordable homes, both to own and rent. We kickstarted this work thanks to an unprecedented gift from the Woodruff Foundation, Wells Fargo's WORTH grant and a new team on the Foundation's staff sourcing opportunities daily. We also relocated 205 families from an egregious apartment complex in Thomasville Heights to safe units across our ATL footprint in a human-centered collaboration between our Foundation, the City of Atlanta and more than 20 nonprofit partners.

None of this is possible without you. As donors and partners in the work, you provide the capital to fulfill our mission. Your investments catalyzed \$195M in ATL and beyond. You helped neighbors find homes, earn scholarships, enjoy summer fun programs between school years, renovate walking trails, provide veterinary care and—the greatest gift—autonomy for nonprofits through general operating support, empowering leaders to do what they know best, with the dollars you give back to our region. You are part of the solution that is moving Atlanta forward. We go far because we go together. Enjoy this tribute to 2023. Note upcoming events this autumn. Thank you.

Doug Hooker, Board Chair

Frank Fernandez, President & CEO





MOVING ATL TO INCREASE AFFORDABLE HOUSING



Forest Cove
apartments

ESTIMATES
SHOW
ATLANTA LOSES
1,500+
AFFORDABLE
HOMES EACH
YEAR

BUILDING A FOUNDATION FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

A safe and affordable house is more than a place to call home. Often, it's the foundation for all other outcomes in life: employment stability, education, health. Each hinges on attaining and maintaining safe, quality, affordable housing.

Yet for far too many of our neighbors, that is increasingly out of reach, creating a ripple effect of instability and inequity throughout our entire community. It's estimated that Atlanta loses more than 1,500 affordable homes each year which often means families are displaced and always means greater financial burden to simply make ends meet. Meanwhile, with metro Atlanta projected to add another 2.9 million people by 2050, nearly 100,000 households might not be able to afford market prices.

As a funder and connector, the Foundation played a central role in what was a historic year in Atlanta: a \$300M commitment to create affordable housing. Using our philanthropic and investment dollars, partnering with other foundations and investors such as the [Robert W. Woodruff Foundation \(\\$75M\)](#) and the [Joseph B. Whitehead Foundation \(\\$25M\)](#), as well as financial institutions and individual investors, we are able to bridge gaps, break down existing barriers for residents and developers, and invest in the whole person, their families and their future.

We have raised \$150M on our path to \$200M to support housing affordability across ATL within the next five years. We made our first impact loans and grants in late 2023 to preserve existing affordable housing that was at threat of being lost, facilitate new housing for those experiencing homelessness and support construction in mixed-income communities.

"Affordable housing is a key catalyst for better opportunity and prosperity," said Foundation president and CEO Frank Fernandez. "Assuring that all residents have a safe and stable place to call home not only benefits those directly affected but also can enhance overall quality of life for our entire community."

We saw the transformative power of this commitment in action in Historic Thomasville, where residents of Forest Cove apartments were living in deplorable and unsafe conditions brought about over decades of neglect.

Partnering with the City and other organizations, the Foundation was able to relocate 205 families (over 800 individuals) to stable housing while helping them acclimate to their new homes and neighborhoods. Throughout 2023 we continued to support their relocation via subsidies, legal counsel, school registration and more in coordination with our partners.

Atlanta-based affordable housing expert Marjy Stagmeier, president of TI Asset Management, provided needed resources and services. Stagmeier notes that despite the poor living conditions at Forest Cove, neighbors had forged strong bonds that she and others are helping to foster moving forward.

"I think the effort to relocate these tenants has been heroic," Stagmeier said. "The Foundation was the catalyst from a funding, logistics and communications perspective to make sure that those who were moved were taken care of properly."*

**Marjy facilitated a Q&A with Dr. Desmond at the event held at Fernbank and is pictured with Frank in the sidebar article to the right.*



Forest Cove apartments

A CONVERSATION WITH PULITZER PRIZE WINNING AUTHOR DR. MATTHEW DESMOND

In September, the Foundation brought Pulitzer Prize winning author Dr. Matthew Desmond to Atlanta to talk with two groups of influencers: nonprofit home developers and our donors. At an evening event of more than 250 attendees at the Fernbank Museum of Natural History, Desmond inspired guests to become poverty abolitionists. Dr. Desmond's new book, *"Poverty by America"* builds off his prior book, *"Evicted"* for which he earned the Pulitzer Prize. His website, endpovertyusa.org, offers resources and ways to get engaged.





MOVING ATL TO TRANSFORM SYSTEMS



Student debt relief grant recipient foresees a brighter future with her children thanks to the Foundation's innovative program.

IN PARTNERSHIP
WITH OUR DONORS,
THE FOUNDATION
ERASED NEARLY
\$300,000
IN STUDENT DEBT
THIS YEAR

A FAIR SHOT AT FINANCIAL FREEDOM

Graduating from college represents a major achievement. Yet for far too many, once that goal is reached, students have yet another hurdle to clear: crippling student debt driven by compounding interest and the rising cost of attendance.

Nationally, student debt has doubled since 2020 to more than \$1.6 trillion dollars in federal student loans—now the second-largest debt in the U.S. following home mortgage debt.

Because of compounding interest and lack of financial counseling, many students graduate with two to three times more debt than their original loan amounts with Black and brown students being impacted most. In Georgia, graduates have an average of \$40,000 in student loans—far exceeding the national average.

Seeing the ripple effect of this inequitable debt—such as having a low credit score that makes buying a new home or investing in a business difficult—the Foundation devised an innovative solution to help college graduates build wealth: the [Student Loan Debt Relief Pilot Program](#).

This year, in partnership with our donors, the Foundation erased nearly \$300,000 in student loan debt, giving many graduates the chance to invest in other areas of their lives.

Over time, the program aims to serve as a systemic solution to addressing student loan debt, thus leading to a more equitable region and shared prosperity for all.

In hopes of helping even more students, recipients were asked to participate in a long-term evaluation and storytelling project to highlight the opportunities that student debt elimination opens to them.

“The generosity of this gift will forever change the future for my family,” said an Atlanta recipient, who saw nearly \$30,000 in student loan debt eliminated through the program. “With these funds, my family will finally be able to have the ability to purchase our first home and start our own family.”

The student loan debt pilot program resonated deeply with donors Brian and Vanessa Friedman, who invested in the effort through their donor-advised fund.

“Vanessa and I both paid our way to school and came out debt free,” Brian said. “That’s just not the reality today. There are students that do everything right by getting into college, working hard and graduating—and they are coming out with their hands tied with debt. That’s just not right.”

Albany State University

	Cost of College
Tuition	
and Board	Fall 296
d Supplies	\$5.106
	\$670

MS. JERELENE'S STORY

What started out as a \$3,000 loan to further her education, turned into a much larger debt that [Jerelene Smith](#) feared she would never be able to pay off.

The Mississippi native known to many as 'Ms. Jerelene' took out her first student loan after graduating high school to attend Coahoma Junior College to study social work.

She took her first job as a social worker with the City of Atlanta, but she switched careers and became a medical professional when her mother fell ill.

While caring for her mom, Ms. Jerelene didn't work, yet her student loan balance continued to swell due to interest and fees—which became a barrier that held her back from achieving other goals.

Ms. Jerelene feared she would never get out from under student debt. But last year she heard about the Foundation's student loan debt relief pilot program and applied.

Much to her joy, the \$10,000 debt was settled in full through the program, opening new doors of opportunity for Ms. Jerelene and her family.

"I didn't believe it," she said. "As a result of my debt settlement, my credit score increased to 700 and we were able to purchase a home. Look at God."



MOVING ATL

TO BE INSPIRED

MEET THE PONDER FAMILY



A FAMILY THAT GIVES TOGETHER

Several times each year, Bert and Rhonda Ponder convene their two adult children for a family meeting.

On the agenda: determining how to best support the greater Atlanta community through a donor-advised fund Bert established about 25 years ago.

Their ground rules for making decisions are simple. Bert and Rhonda, and their children—Skeet Ponder and Wyn Diaz—can each direct a portion of the fund's assets to a cause they're personally passionate about.

For the remaining funds, they hold a series of meetings—deftly facilitated by philanthropic officer Amanda Rubin—to determine which organizations they would like to support together.

Then, the family votes to make its final decisions.

"We might not be great at coming to a consensus on where we're going to dinner Friday night," Wyn said. "But we've done well with this process. We're good at meeting in the middle when it involves something tied to the greater good."

Bert, a private wealth advisor with Ponder Jowers & Associates and a longtime advocate for the Community Foundation, started the family's fund with the goal of creating a legacy while also supporting worthy nonprofits each year.

The family has since honed its process for making giving decisions with guidance from the Community Foundation, which has served as a trusted advisor at every step.

The experience has helped target the family's efforts for giving back—and opened its eyes to both the tremendous need in the region and to the scores of nonprofits committed to addressing key challenges and improving quality of life.

It has also strengthened their family's bond.

"It's nice to have something like this that the four of us are focused on together," said Rhonda.

For Skeet, who lives in Charlotte, the fund helps keep him more closely connected to his family—and to the community where he grew up.

After consulting with their children, Bert and Rhonda recently revised their wills to help ensure the family can continue coming together to give even after they are gone, with Skeet and Wyn carrying on the tradition with their growing families.

"From the start I knew this wouldn't work if it was just Dad's thing," Bert said. "We tested the waters and it turned out to be a great experience. I mean, I brag every time I'm around somebody who knows the Community Foundation about how great this has been for our family."



Bert established
the donor-advised
fund about 25
years ago.



MOVING ATL TO PROSPER

In collaboration with [WABE](#), the Foundation hosted three Facts & Acts events in 2023. This ongoing series engages the public on critical community needs and how to address them.



GRANTMAKING FOR IMPACT

We are a proud steward of our region's philanthropic assets, entrusted to us by generous donors to advance equity and shared prosperity for all in greater Atlanta. In 2023, our total assets were \$1.32 billion. If you would like to support TogetherATL through your grantmaking, reach out to your philanthropic officer or visit the donor portal.

\$195M
INVESTED IN
STRENGTHENING
OUR REGION AND
BEYOND

\$1.32B
TOTAL
FOUNDATION
ASSETS

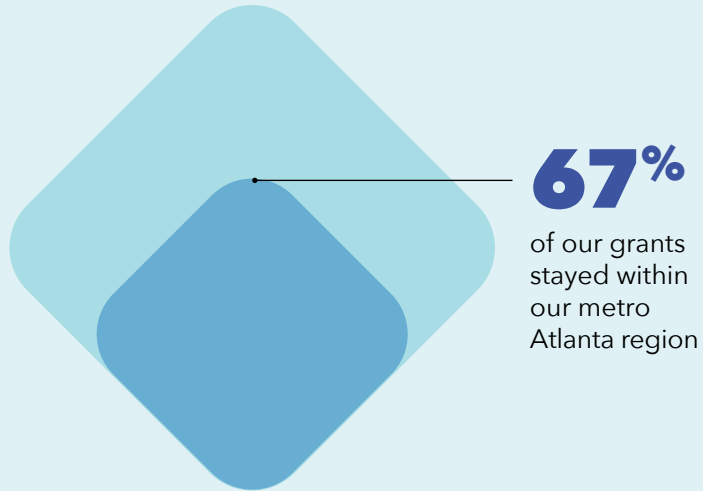
\$275M
IN NEW
DONOR
GIFTS

34
FUNDS
OPENED IN
2023

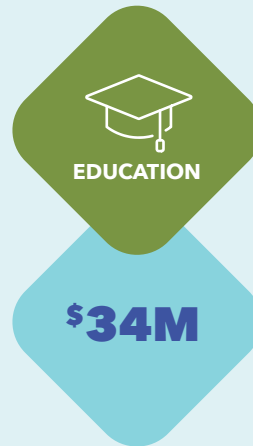
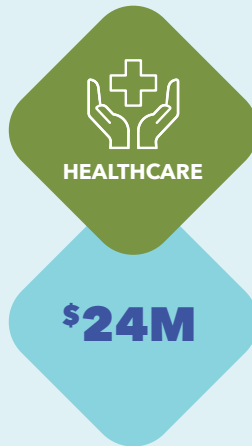
65%
OF GRANTS
WERE THROUGH
DONOR-ADVISED
FUNDS

\$18.4M
FOR AFFORDABLE
HOUSING
THROUGH IMPACT
INVESTMENTS

MAKING LOCAL IMPACT



GRANTS WERE MADE IN 27 ISSUE AREAS THE TOP THREE WERE:



THE POWER OF A GIVING HEART

The Philanthropic Advisors Leadership Institute (PALI) was founded in 2010 by the Foundation, the Jewish Federation and the United Way to provide financial, legal and tax professionals with exclusive training to better incorporate charitable planning into their professional practices and client services.

PALI participants gain understanding about their clients' values-driven motivations—and how to unearth those values in a productive way, while simultaneously nurturing strong relationships with colleagues, which has now amassed an alumni network of 250+ who meet for continuing education annually.

Malik Lee, a 2022 PALI graduate, described it this way, "When I decided to learn more about philanthropy, I repeatedly saw two traits standing out: a giving heart and a passion for the community. Both were on full display during the PALI program. We focused on communities within our backyard and learned about some of Georgia's most outstanding philanthropists. We dug into why they are giving, whom they are giving to and what is the driving force surrounding their passions."



To learn more about the 2024 PALI classes, visit cfgreateratlanta.org/pali-balser.

The financial information contained in this annual report is unaudited and summarized. Our 2023 audited financial statements and 990 will be posted in November 2024. Until then, visit cfgreateratlanta.org to view our 2022 audited statements and 990.



MOVING ATL

BY WORKING TOGETHER

We translate our
new website into
12 additional languages
so more visitors can learn
about our work for equity
and shared prosperity

The Community
Foundation for Greater
Atlanta announced
five new board
members

ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW BOARD MEMBERS



Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta announced five new board members who serve on and lead volunteer committees that amplify the Foundation's mission to inspire and lead our region toward equity and shared prosperity for all.

New members include:

- Janine Brown, partner-in-charge, Alston & Bird Atlanta office
- Roxana Chicas, assistant professor, Emory University School of Nursing
- Soumaya Khalifa, founder, Khalifa Consulting and executive director, Islamic Speakers Bureau of Atlanta
- Tiffany McKenzie, partner, Harrison LLP
- Natosha Reid Rice, global diversity, equity and inclusion officer, Habitat for Humanity International

Pictured: Back row: Marc Pollack, Julia Houston, Ron Alston, Lovette Russell, Natosha Reid Rice, David Roemer

Middle row: Bert Clark, Janine Brown, Frank Fernandez, Doug Hooker, Soumaya Khalifa, Ryan Wilson

Front row: Richard Courts, Jewel Burks Solomon, Kelli Stewart, Roxanna Chicas, Tiffany McKenzie

Board members not pictured: Jen Bennecke, Peter Berg, Julie Ann Crommett, Fran Gary, Jeffrey Hines, M.D., Debra Lam, Wonya Lucas, Dantes Rameau, Johanna Ellis Reisinger, Dekia Scott, Marjy Stagmeier

PHILANTHROPIC LEADER OF TOMORROW



Ryan Wilson is a beacon of hope to Atlantans.

As co-founder and CEO of The Gathering

Spot—a hub for creatives, business professionals and other like-minded individuals to make meaningful connections and collaborate—Wilson has redefined what it means to network and collaborate.

Wilson is an Atlanta native and proudly serves his community in various ways—including serving as a member of the Community Foundation’s board of directors.

He is also a distinguished speaker and moderator and was named Small Business Person of the Year by the *Atlanta Business Chronicle* and one of the country’s most influential African-Americans in *The Root 100*. His work has been featured in *The Wall Street Journal*, *Fast Company*, *Forbes* and *The New York Times*.

He was named Philanthropic Leader of Tomorrow by the Association of FundRaising Professionals at Atlanta’s National Philanthropy Day celebration in November for his selflessness, compassion and unwavering dedication to building his community.

PHILANTHROPIST OF THE YEAR



Meet Jerry Wilkinson—an inspiring example of generosity and compassion.

Wilkinson was named “Philanthropist of the Year” at Atlanta’s National Philanthropy Day celebration in November for his unwavering commitment to philanthropy. Over his lifetime, Wilkinson has given more than \$100M to philanthropic causes and established the Wilkinson Family Fund through the Community Foundation.

As founder and chairman of The Wilkinson Group, Inc.—a privately-held real estate investment, management and construction firm—Wilkinson’s vision and leadership is well respected throughout Atlanta’s real estate community and beyond.

He and his wife, Bev, are longtime supporters of the Community Foundation and, in 2018, he became a board member.

Wilkinson has committed to leaving all of his residual wealth to the Community Foundation to start a permanent endowment.



In July, host Rose Scott talked with panelists from South Atlanta, Lakewood Heights and nearby neighborhoods about pressing issues facing their community including affordable housing, economic development, transit and community safety. (Above: Rose Scott with Jamin Butler, CEO and co-owner of Black Coffee Atlanta)

COFFEE CONVERSATIONS

Coffee shops are a great place for gathering, where members of a community can join together to host a book club or spark meaningful conversations over a good cup of joe.

In partnership since 2018 with Atlanta’s public broadcasting station,



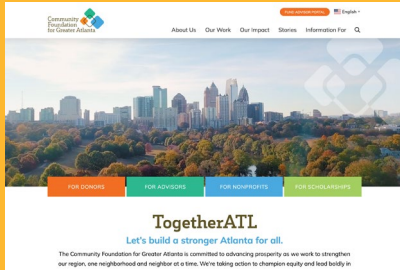
Rose Scott in conversation with Decatur Mayor Patti Garrett at Waller’s Coffee Shop in April.

WABE, the Foundation invested in on-air programming titled Coffee Conversations which were held at local coffee shops and featured interviews with community leaders, government representatives and small business owners.

Hosted by award-winning journalist Rose Scott, Coffee Conversations amplifies community voices and fosters civic engagement by addressing neighborhood-related issues like community development, health access and housing affordability.

Join us for more Coffee Conversations in 2024. Watch Foundation social channels for dates and details.

IMPROVING OUR SERVICES, BEGINNING WITH A USER-FRIENDLY WEBSITE



In 2023 we heard from many donors about ways we could improve our service to you. To that end, we have worked to add new staff with specific areas of expertise, implement a new customer relationship management system for tracking your bespoke account details and, in October, the Foundation revealed a comprehensive new website that is more inclusive and user-friendly for all of its supporters and partners.

With its new look, the site offers accessibility adjustments for vision impairment, cognitive disabilities and more, while simultaneously scaling to any device you use to connect with us. If English isn't your first language, no problem. We translate it into 12 additional languages instantly—including those with different alphabets like Chinese and Hindi, so more visitors can learn about our work for equity and shared prosperity.

In 2024, our focus is on evolving, educating and engaging in every facet of our Foundation's business. To that end, look for more and more improvements in your experience.

SAVE THE DATE: EVENTS HAPPENING IN 2024

**INVESTMENT BRIEFING:
WHAT IMPACT DOES MY DAF HAVE
ON THE COMMUNITY NOW?
THURSDAY, AUGUST 22, 11 A.M.-1:30 P.M.**
Pittsburgh Yards

Join Disciplina, the Foundation's investment firm, for a look into the Foundation's investment performance and how your dollars make an impact.

**NEIL ASKS: HOW CAN PHILANTHROPY HELP
CREATE A THRIVING ATLANTA ARTS SCENE?
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 10, 6-8 P.M.**
ZuCot Gallery

The arts community is a growing force in Atlanta, but many people are unaware. Join us as we discuss how your generosity can help the arts in Atlanta thrive.

**NATIONAL PHILANTHROPY DAY
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 11:30 A.M.-1:30 P.M.**
Georgia Aquarium Ballroom

In the event of the year, join 800+ fellow business, civic and nonprofit leaders to celebrate the significant philanthropic events and individuals of 2024 and get a peek into what's ahead for giving back in 2025.

**COMING FALL 2024!
THE GIVING LIFE**
Be on the lookout for an all-new *The Giving Life* magazine.

IN COLLABORATION WITH WABE
Watch social media and/or check our events page for details in our ongoing Facts & Acts and/or Coffee Conversations programs.



cfdgreateratlanta.org/donorevents



NEIL ASKS

Honoring the leadership legacy of Neil Williams Jr.—a prominent Atlanta lawyer and strong community advocate—Neil Asks is a program that aims to create more conversations around leadership and innovation and how by supporting the arts community local businesses and philanthropy contribute to Atlanta's economic growth.

Neil Asks became a program of the Community Foundation in 2019. By promoting civic engagement, program participants listen to differing views and perspectives and inspire others to do the same in order to guide Atlantans toward greater hope, innovation and service.

Williams—who passed away suddenly in 2012—dedicated his life's work to mentoring lawyers and executives, serving his community and advocating for arts and education.

Join us on Thursday, October 10, as we discuss how your generosity can help the arts in Atlanta thrive.

Above: Dr. Rebecca Parshall introducing speakers at the 2023 Neil Asks event.



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cfgreateratlanta.org