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**COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FUNDS
FIRST THREE YEARS OF THE BASICS CHATTAHOOCHEE VALLEY**

COLUMBUS, GA – March 10, 2020 - In an unprecedented decision, the board of trustees of the Community Foundation of the Chattahoochee Valley has committed to use the majority of the annual spendable amounts from the organization's unrestricted Community Endowment Funds to underwrite the first three years of the operating budget of The Basics Chattahoochee Valley, Betsy Covington, CFCV president and CEO, announced today.

The Basics Chattahoochee Valley is a regional initiative launched by the Talented, Educated People action area of Columbus 2025 in association with the Boston Basic organization, a public-private partnership that grew out of work by the Achievement Gap Initiative (AGI) at Harvard University.

The Basics are five evidence-based parenting and caregiving principles that can be life-changing for children of all backgrounds, from birth to age 3. The five fun, simple and powerful principles, which ideally every child should experience every day, are:

- Maximize Love; Manage Stress.
- Talk, Sing, and Point.
- Count, Group, and Compare.
- Explore through Movement and Play.
- Read and Discuss Stories.

"Now that neuroscientists have discovered that 80% of brain development happens in the first three years of life, it becomes urgent that we invest in these youngest citizens in a way that maximizes their chance at a successful future," said Betsy Covington, CFCV's president and CEO. "By the end of children's third years, some brains have pruned unused synapses and others have strengthened brain connections that will remain for life. The state of a child's brain by the end of that third year literally affects their ability to learn throughout their lives. That information is powerful, and how we respond to it plays a part in the success of our children."

Our community's poverty rate of nearly 22 percent is concerningly high. We at the Community Foundation believe that this upstream investment in our future will pay off in a stronger, healthier, more successful Chattahoochee Valley."

The grant from the Community Foundation will support the operational expenses of The Basics Chattahoochee Valley for the first three years. Operating costs include items such as a full-time executive director salary as well as a marketing budget. Funding comes from CFCV's Community Endowment Fund and its named sub-funds: the Moselle W. and H. Quigg Fletcher, Jr., Endowment Fund and the Susan and Butch Cochran Family Fund.

The Community Endowment Funds are permanent assets contributed by donors who have entrusted the Community Foundation with investing the funds in a way that benefits the Chattahoochee Valley in perpetuity. For the last three years, CFCV used these discretionary funds to administer a competitive grant program in support of innovative projects and projects that aligned with Columbus 2025. CFCV's support of The Basics Chattahoochee Valley represents a more focused investment in Columbus 2025's overall goal to increase prosperity, reduce poverty, and improve overall quality of life for a stronger and more vibrant region for decades to come.

With over 50 implementation partners, this campaign's goal is to saturate the Chattahoochee Valley in The Basics, with parents, family members, day care staff, church workers and others who come in contact with children during their first three years of life—including area employers and community leaders—all understanding the importance of promoting these five principles to give children the best start in life.

"I have been teaching parents and caregivers The Basics in my pediatric practice for a year now. I love the reaction when parents embrace these concepts and practice them with their children in my office," says Dr. Susan McWhirter, Pediatrician, Rivertown Pediatrics.

Commented Helena Coates, Chair, Birth to Pre-K Committee, Talented, Educated People Action Area of Columbus 2025, "The amount of effort put in by dozens of partners and hundreds of people to bring The Basics Chattahoochee Valley to our community is a tribute to the importance of this initiative and its potential impact for helping us achieve our long-term goals of reducing poverty, increasing prosperity and improving our quality of life. The grant awarded by the Community Foundation to fund this office will enhance our engagement in the valley and increase our impact — allowing for faster, more in-depth and positive changes. This will help us ensure all children are ready to thrive by the time they enter Pre-kindergarten."

To view the full list of implementation partners, as well as detailed resources including videos, handouts and more, please visit cv.thebasics.org. Operations for The Basics will be housed at and administered by United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley, in partnership with Columbus 2025.

The Basics Chattahoochee Valley is currently hiring a full-time executive director. To learn more or apply, visit the United Way of the Chattahoochee Valley's website unitedwayofthecv.org.

To learn more about the Community Endowment Funds or about establishing a Fund at the Community Foundation, please contact JJ Musgrove, CFCV's director of donor services at 706-320-0027.

About the Community Foundation of the Chattahoochee Valley

The Community Foundation of the Chattahoochee Valley was formed in 1998 by a group of citizens interested in encouraging philanthropy and strengthening our communities. Since then, the Community Foundation has grown to more than \$190 million in assets and has awarded over \$185 million in grants through its donor advised, unrestricted, designated, field-of-interest, scholarship, and organization endowment funds. As a local center for philanthropy, the Community Foundation works with individuals, families, corporations, private foundations and not-for-profit organizations to carry out their charitable objectives and address community needs.

For more, contact the Community Foundation at (706) 320-0027 or visit cfcv.com.

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