



the**community**foundation

“Taking Flight with The Community Foundation”  
Comments by Walker Sanders

Today, we celebrate our milestone Silver Anniversary. Twenty-five years ago, a group of citizens led by **CYNTHIA DOYLE, THORNTON BROOKS** and **ROGER SOLES** founded the Community Foundation in Room 232 of the Jefferson-Pilot building.

I can remember my first conversation with Roger Soles, when I arrived in Greensboro. As you can imagine, I had heard of Mr. Soles’ reputation and I was prepared. I knew all financial ratios, asset growth rates, investments returns, etc. However, the one question he asked, I wasn’t prepared to answer. He asked: “What is the balance of our unrestricted endowment?”

Of course, I was focused on growing the Foundation from \$50 million to \$100 million to \$500 million. But he reminded me that our mission is to create a permanent resource that would always enable Greensboro to thrive and prosper. He said they didn’t know what the issues would be and they knew corporate profits would rise and fall, but needs facing a community will remain constant at best. And, he added, strong communities have strong resources at their disposal that enable them to sail through turbulent economic times.

Now, 25 years later, we are facing some of the most uncertain economic times many of us have ever faced. How right our founding directors were!

Over the past 25 years, your Community Foundation has enabled more than \$250 million in charitable giving! This includes contributions from thousands of donors in our community and grants from one of the more than 600 funds we manage.

The Community Foundation has provided housing for dozens of families through many partnerships – most notably due to the leadership of Vic Nussbaum and Roger Kavanagh.

We now manage over 100 endowments for local nonprofit organizations. We value all these partnerships as they maximize our resources – such as planned giving expertise, investment management and fund accounting – for the nonprofits to grow their endowments as efficiently as possible.

The Community Foundation manages more than 300 funds for individuals, families and business to help with their giving, and we manage another 200 funds that provide organizations with fiscal administration, venture capital, emergency funding or seed grants. Whether it is providing administrative support to our Bicentennial Celebration or providing venture capital to help launch the Guilford Education Alliance, or emergency funding to help Triad Health Project stay open during a tragic flood of their offices, or a small seed grant to start a new organization like Joseph's House so young homeless boys will have a place to call home, we are dedicated to addressing issues as they emerge in Greensboro.

In 1983, our founders did not know that we would have an HIV/AIDS epidemic, or a consolidated school system or young boys living on the streets. But their vision put in place the resources to be sure our community would be in position to respond.

As we look ahead, we are committed to engaging even larger numbers of people, mobilizing greater resources and investing in critical community issues. Our plan is to create a series of high-impact, permanent endowments that builds on the legacy of our founding directors!

These endowments will address ...

- ... Women's issues, building on the outstanding leadership women have provided our community. The Women to Women Endowment already has raised over \$1.2 million – an incredible feat in such a short period of time and during a period of dramatic economic downturn. The goal is to raise \$3 million to provide high-impact improvements to issues of interest to women in Greensboro. While you ate, you saw these donors' names and photos on the screen. Let's thank them again for helping make the launch of Women to

Women so successful. The next phase of Women to Women will begin in March and will be led by Pam Stearns.

- ... Housing, to assure all people have a safe and affordable place to live. The Community Foundation will use these endowments to leverage new opportunities, such as the Gate City Company's proposal to consolidate Guilford County Schools administrative offices or to work with existing organizations to create new housing opportunities with the Nussbaum and Kavanagh Funds
- Opportunities for young professionals to have impact through the Future Fund, which is on track to complete its \$1 million endowment, making it one of the largest endowments of its kind in the country
- We will build on the transformative power of the arts to enhance community with the Public Art Endowment. The goal here is to raise \$2 million to enable people who share a common experience and open eyes to new possibilities through public art
- And of course our new endowments will build on our social capital to expand our Community Grants Program to award at least \$1 million every year. We need the ability to invest in more partnerships such as IMPACT Greensboro, Action Greensboro and Building Stronger Neighborhoods.

In these troubling economic times, these endowments are critical for our community to navigate these rough seas.

To help spread this message and in honor of our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we created a new logo and Web site focused on the **COMMUNITY** nature of our work. We are **YOUR** Community Foundation and this is **YOUR** brand - a symbol, if you will, of our collective efforts to rise to new heights for the collective benefit of all.

The goals of our new web site – **still at CFGG.org** – is to provide you and the public with an interactive vehicle to learn more about Greensboro's new and emerging issues, giving opportunities in your areas of interest and an enhanced understanding of how such contributions make an important impact on where we live. And, most importantly, how you may get involved in your community in the ways most important to you.

I can't tell you how excited I am about our future and the Foundation's staff committed to helping you and our community reach these aspirations. If our staff could please stand so we can recognize you for your professionalism and dedication to this community. It is inspiring.

And today I want to thank each and everyone of you and the thousands of donors who have made our first 25 years successful. And the thousand more that will continue investing in Greensboro for generations to come.

Imagine a foundation that has the resources to enable all sectors of our community to be engaged, to give back and support those causes that are closest to their hearts. Join our family. Help us leverage resources. As we are saying today, together we can **TAKE FLIGHT** and soar to new heights and impact our future in ways we can't even imagine.