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**For information contact:
Frances Mock, Communications & Finance Manager
317-268-6240
frances@hendrickscountycf.org**

HCCF Receives \$200,000 Community Leadership Grant from Lilly Endowment

The Hendricks County Community Foundation (HCCF) has received a Community Leadership Grant of \$200,000 as part of the seventh phase of Lilly Endowment Inc.'s Giving Indiana Funds for Tomorrow (GIFT VII) initiative. With the grant, HCCF plans to address three critical issues: increased civic engagement, more collaboration and increased efficiency of services in Hendricks County, and a stronger sense of community pride. The Community Foundation is committed to pursuing Hendricks County's greatest opportunities through addressing our most critical challenges, inclusively uniting people, institutions and resources from throughout the community to produce significant, widely shared and lasting results.

The Hendricks County Community Foundation is one of 84 foundations in Indiana receiving grants through this round of GIFT VII grantmaking. Lilly Endowment created GIFT in 1990 to help local communities in Indiana develop the philanthropic capacity to identify local needs and challenges. It launched GIFT VII in 2018 and made available a total of \$125 million to help foundations strengthen their leadership capacities in the towns, cities and counties they serve. Lilly Endowment expects to make additional GIFT VII grants in the coming months.

"Lilly Endowment and the GIFT program have provided incredible benefit to Hendricks County," said William Rhodehamel, President and CEO of HCCF. "We've had the opportunity to engage our community in so many new and effective ways. We've learned so much from hearing from our neighbors during our planning grant, and we look forward to working to build community unity through our implementation grant."

As part of GIFT VII, HCCF was awarded a planning grant of \$100,000 in 2019 to convene local stakeholders to identify, prioritize and assess opportunities and challenges in Hendricks County. In March of 2020, the Community Foundation was invited to apply for a GIFT VII Community Leadership Grant to implement strategies and activities identified during the planning period. Although HCCF did not receive the Large-Scale grant, the organization was awarded the \$200,000 Community Leadership Grant.

"Our community was hungry to be heard and turned out in force to one-on-one meetings, focus groups, to complete the survey, and then to work through the data to create community priorities," said Eric Hessel, Vice President of Programming at HCCF. "It was encouraging to see our community so fully participate in the process. And yet, we had a difficult time reaching communities of color in our county. This will be a primary focus of our ongoing work--creating a welcoming community where everyone has, and takes, a seat at the table."

Community unity was chosen as the most important issue affecting our community. A community task force was elected in January 2020 to develop a set of outcomes and tactics that address

unity. As a diverse, generally urban-to-rural community, HCCF understands that without community unity, we cannot solve problems, big or small, that affect Hendricks County. Outcomes for Community Unity were defined as 1) More civic engagement (voting, volunteerism, and community participation), 2) More collaboration and increased streamlining of services, and 3) Stronger sense of Hendricks County pride/brand. The Implementation Grant will provide the resources the Community Foundation needs to put these tactics to work for the betterment of our community, now and in the future.

"The \$100,000 planning grant from Lilly Endowment gave the Community Foundation an opportunity it had never had before, to become a thought leader and a convener to address critical needs in our community," said Max Hank, HCCF Board Chair. "We are excited for the opportunity provided by the \$200,000 grant that will allow us to continue in this leadership role and help unify Hendricks County."

Lilly Endowment Inc. is an Indianapolis-based private philanthropic foundation created in 1937 by J.K. Lilly, Sr. and his sons Eli and J.K. Jr. through gifts of stock in their pharmaceutical business, Eli Lilly and Company. Although the gifts of stock remain a financial bedrock of the Endowment, it is a separate entity from the company, with a distinct governing board, staff and location. In keeping with the founders' wishes, the Endowment supports the causes of community development, education and religion. The Endowment funds significant programs throughout the United States, especially in the field of religion. However, it maintains a special commitment to its founders' hometown, Indianapolis, and home state, Indiana.

The Hendricks County Community Foundation partners with generous people to realize their charitable goals while addressing community needs in meaningful and lasting ways. The Community Foundation manages assets of over \$18 million in a collection of funds created by individuals, families, businesses and organizations for charitable purposes. In 2019, the Community Foundation awarded over \$1.6 million in grants to charitable organizations and scholarships to local students. For more information, call 317-268-6240 or visit www.hendrickscountycf.org.



Hendricks County Community Foundation | info@hendrickscountycf.org |