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Goodman Foundation Provides Lead Endowment Gift of \$5 Million for Madison Community Foundation's New Nonprofit Center

MADISON, Wis., May 9, 2024 – A \$5 million lead gift from the Irwin A. and Robert D. Goodman Foundation will help endow the new Goodman Nonprofit Center, which is being developed by Madison Community Foundation. This center will address a critical gap in professional resources for nonprofit organizations.

Despite the vital role nonprofits play in our community, Wisconsin lacks a statewide nonprofit association, placing it as one of only four states without such a resource. Yet nonprofits are essential to the well-being of our community and make up a sizable portion of the local economy – an estimated 11% of the workforce and billions of dollars in economic activity. The lack of a dedicated resource center leaves these organizations struggling to piece together the professional development resources they need to advance their missions and realize their full potential.

"Thanks to the incredible generosity of the Goodman Foundation, we will be able to move forward with plans to create a much-needed nonprofit center for the Greater Madison area," said Bob Sorge, MCF's President and CEO. "The Goodman Nonprofit Center will serve as a hub for education, collaboration, research and support for nonprofit leaders in our community."

The Goodman brothers and the Goodman Foundation have long been major supporters of nonprofit organizations working in the Madison area. The Goodman Foundation has made numerous transformational gifts, totaling \$67 million, in the last 14 years.

"The Goodman Foundation has worked with many local nonprofits," noted E.G. Schramka, Executive Director of the Irwin A. and Robert D. Goodman Foundation. "This gift will preserve and enhance the legacy of the Goodman brothers by ensuring that the leaders running nonprofits addressing strategic focus areas that were important to the Goodman brothers will have access to the professional development resources they need to continue to expand their impact."

Realizing a Transformational Opportunity

The need for a nonprofit center in Greater Madison is well established. A joint study of 80 nonprofits conducted by MCF and UW-Madison Extension Dane County, published in 2022, concluded that the need for capacity-building resources was the primary issue facing the local nonprofit field. In addition, the number of local nonprofit organizations has doubled in the last two decades. There is no place dedicated to serving and developing the 4,500 organizations in the Greater Madison area, and lack of knowledge about the sector leads to redundancy and inefficiency.

“Providing nonprofits with access to the information they need, professional development, and a neutral space to advance collaboration will help these organizations and their leaders use the resources entrusted to them more efficiently and effectively,” said Tom Linfield, Vice President of Community Impact at MCF. “We’re so grateful to the Goodman Foundation for its generous gift to help make this center a reality for our community.”

Programs and Resources to Enhance Nonprofit Excellence

Beginning in late 2025, the Goodman Nonprofit Center will launch a year-long professional leadership development training program, an online resource library, a calendar of local workshops, a directory of consultants, and will create a forum where organizations can gather to collaborate.

These initial programs were selected as the result of extensive research conducted by MCF, showing that nonprofits want training in practical business skills and are looking for in-depth learning experiences. The Goodman Fellows Program will focus on professional leadership development, providing the opportunity for leaders to gather regularly, build relationships, and foster skills in finance, program evaluation, human resources, marketing, fundraising, and other topics.

The free, online resource library will strengthen nonprofit organizations by providing curated materials from credible sources on key subjects such as fundraising, board development, capital campaigns, finance and operations, advocacy, and impact investing.

For nonprofits looking for focused learning on specific subject matter, the Nonprofit Center will connect them to those who offer that content by collaborating with several other local organizations.

A directory will allow nonprofits to review the qualifications and experience of local consultants, ensuring the best fit for the projects they have.

And finally, the Nonprofit Center will provide a forum for nonprofit organizations to work together, perhaps collaborating on major grants from outside the region. Tapping into these funding sources – whether grants from national foundations or federal funds – could provide millions of additional dollars of funding for local organizations.

Given the lack of a nonprofit center regionally, Center programming will be available to nonprofits serving Dane, Iowa, Sauk, Columbia and Green counties – Greater Madison.

“One of the many challenges of the nonprofit field is the lack of access to professional development,” said Schramka. “We hope other funders will join us in supporting this new resource for the Greater Madison area, and further leverage their current donations by enhancing the skill sets of nonprofit leaders.”

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About Madison Community Foundation: MCF works with donors and nonprofit organizations to achieve its mission to engage Greater Madison in philanthropy to advance a more vibrant and equitable community. It serves more than 600 individual and 300 nonprofit fundholders, and in 2023, together with its fundholders, distributed \$12.5 million into the community. To learn more visit www.madisongives.org.