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CFAAC Harnesses Talents of Morehead-Cain Scholars for Community Betterment

(Annapolis, MD, May 28, 2024) The Community Foundation of Anne Arundel County (CFAAC) is proud to welcome five Morehead-Cain Scholars from the University of North Carolina (UNC) this summer. Scholars Brady Andrew, Lillian Brooks, Nandini Kanthi, Derek Peng, and Catherine Scott will be working with the CFAAC team for eight weeks this summer to create an in-depth report that will inform its grantmaking strategies and pioneer new solutions to longstanding community challenges.

Morehead-Cain Scholars are top students selected from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill who participate in many educational experiences above and beyond their college courses. As part of their experience, they take part in four, fully funded summer enrichment programs. This summer, the scholars are fulfilling their "Civic Collaboration summer" in which teams of scholars embed themselves in cities across the U.S., investigate those communities' challenges and opportunities, and propose real solutions. This year, Annapolis and Anne Arundel County are part of this program.

The five scholars will review CFAAC's [Community Needs Assessment Report, Poverty Amidst Plenty VII](#), study the data generated by grants made to address community needs, and work with county constituents to recommend solutions. By working in our community and connecting with key stakeholders across the county, they will be asked to share their thoughts on where the greatest impacts were made and where gaps still exist so that CFAAC can evaluate their findings and develop our programs and grant-making to be most strategic. As they engage with the people steeped in this work, the scholars will be asked to consider, among other areas of high priority needs, how CFAAC can best align with the Governor Moore's ENOUGH Act initiative, which examines root causes of poverty; in particular, as it relates to children.

"The timeline of the Morehead-Cain Scholar program matches up perfectly with CFAAC's largest grant cycle, [Fund for Anne Arundel](#), which focuses on the mental and physical well-being of children," said CFAAC President and CEO Mary Spencer. "So the scholars will have an opportunity for a firsthand experience with our grant review and decision-making processes for funding these need-based applications."

The five scholars hosted by CFAAC will be addressing these questions:

- How is CFAAC's grantmaking aligned with the needs identified in the Community Needs Assessment Report, *Poverty Amidst Plenty*, and what adjustments could be made to align the work of CFAAC and other nonprofits to address the critical needs of our community?
- What can the nonprofit sector do, individually, or as a coordinated effort, to tackle the issue of child poverty in Anne Arundel County, particularly in our Communities of Hope?
- How can philanthropy in Anne Arundel County support Governor Moore's ENOUGH Act Initiative to tackle the issue of child poverty in Anne Arundel County?
- How can progress be made toward finding concrete solutions to address the greatest needs in Anne Arundel County, as outlined in the Community Needs Assessment Report, *Poverty Amidst Plenty*, particularly in one or more of Anne Arundel County's Communities of Hope?

"The assessment report serves as a cornerstone in forming CFAAC strategy as we direct \$5 to \$7 million in grants annually to our county's nonprofit community," said Spencer. "To have a fresh perspective from these amazing young people to help us with solutions to our community's most pressing needs is priceless. Now more than ever, it is critical to the well-being of our citizens that we act as effectively as possible with a limited amount of available funding."

Conclusions made by the scholars in their final report will be considered for inclusion in CFAAC communication and presentations of possible solutions as they relate to the 2025 Community Needs Assessment Report, *Poverty Amidst Plenty VIII*.

About CFAAC:

The Community Foundation of Anne Arundel County (CFAAC) is a tax-exempt, 501(c)(3), publicly supported philanthropic organization with the long-term goal of building permanent funds that provide support to local nonprofit organizations through grants and special projects. Our mission is to inspire and promote giving in Anne Arundel County by connecting people who care with causes that matter. Established in 1998, CFAAC is one of the largest funders of nonprofit organizations in Anne Arundel County. CFAAC distributes \$5-\$7 million annually to a variety of nonprofit organizations. Learn more at www.cfaac.org.

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