

March 17, 2020

**The Howard R. Levine Foundation and Truist Financial Corporation each commit  
\$1 million to COVID-19 Response Fund**

*Mecklenburg County commits \$1.3 million, increasing total to more than \$5.3 million*

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**Foundation For  
The Carolinas**

220 North Tryon Street  
Charlotte, NC 28202

Phone: 704.973.4500  
Toll Free: 800.973.7244  
Fax: 704.973.4599

[www.fftc.org](http://www.fftc.org)

CHARLOTTE – The Howard R. Levine Foundation and Truist Financial Corporation announced Tuesday that they are donating \$1 million each to the COVID-19 Response Fund, a community-wide effort to assist those affected by the coronavirus pandemic. Foundation For The Carolinas and United Way of Central Carolinas launched the fund Monday to support a range of organizations assisting members of the community, particularly those most vulnerable.

The commitment from the Howard R. Levine Foundation was the first major gift from a family foundation.

“The COVID-19 pandemic will affect our community in ways we have not yet imagined, and our nonprofits will be called on like never before, while experiencing financial strain themselves,” said Howard Levine. “Yesterday, the corporate and civic sectors stepped up to the plate to support this fund, and I know it’s critical that private philanthropy plays a role as well. That’s why I’ve committed \$1 million to support organizations that will be aiding those in our community that need it the most.”

Truist was recently formed from a merger between BB&T and SunTrust banks and located its headquarters in Charlotte. Metrolina Region President Heath Campbell said it was important for Truist to support the community.

“Now is the time for us to come together, because this coronavirus pandemic is a challenge unlike any we’ve seen in the recent past,” Campbell said. “At Truist, we care about this community we now call home. It’s important for us to join this effort to help those who need it the most. Through the COVID-19 Response Fund, we can get funds directly to the agencies that are directly serving the most vulnerable among us.”

Mecklenburg County also committed \$1.3 million to the COVID-19 Response Fund on Tuesday night, bringing the total to more than \$5.3 million. The County Commission voted in favor of the commitment after the two gifts were announced.

Individuals are urged to donate at [HelpCharMeck.org](http://HelpCharMeck.org). Local agencies and nonprofits are already feeling the strain to deal with increased needs as the economy tightens, workers are asked to stay home, school cancellations cause disruptions and those without insurance are facing additional challenges getting the care they need.

The COVID-19 Response Fund was kickstarted with a \$1 million gift from LendingTree, which was matched by \$1 million from the City of Charlotte.

The fund is administered through a partnership between Foundation For The Carolinas and United Way of Central Carolinas, in close coordination with the City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County. Grants will be awarded by an advisory group of community mem-

bers and will be open to any agency that meets the eligibility criteria. The advisory committee may elect to make grants directly to organizations based upon the urgency of the need or through a competitive grantmaking process. Details regarding the grants program will be forthcoming as fundraising continues.

“Thanks to the generosity of Howard Levine, Truist and Mecklenburg County, we’ve now had five significant gifts in two days. But more is obviously needed,” said United Way of Central Carolinas President and CEO Laura Yates Clark. “Our community has faced many obstacles in the past, and we’ve always rallied. Now is the time to come together and give, so we can minimize the impact of this crisis.”

“I was not surprised that Howard responded to the call to help, because as one of our city’s most prominent philanthropists, his generosity and compassion is unparalleled,” said Foundation For The Carolinas President and CEO Michael Marsicano. “I urge other families to follow his lead. We need more companies like Truist to show generous leadership in these difficult times. Although new to our community, Truist is already one of our most compassionate corporate partners.”

**To contribute to the COVID-19 Response Fund, visit [HelpCharMeck.org](https://www.HelpCharMeck.org).** Corporations and foundations that wish to make a donation may contact either Catherine Warfield, Senior Vice President of Philanthropic Advancement at FFTC, at 704.973.4515 or [cwarfield@fftc.org](mailto:cwarfield@fftc.org); or Clint Hill, Chief Development Officer at United Way of Central Carolinas, at 704.371.6359 or [chill@uwcentralcarolinas.org](mailto:chill@uwcentralcarolinas.org).

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#### About Foundation For The Carolinas

Founded in 1958, Foundation For The Carolinas is the sixth-largest nonprofit community foundation in the country, serving donors and a broad range of charitable purposes in North and South Carolina. With assets of \$2.7 billion, FFTC’s mission is to inspire philanthropy and empower individuals to create a better community. Visit [www.fftc.org](https://www.fftc.org).

#### About United Way of Central Carolinas

United Way fights for the education, health and financial stability of every person in our region, improving lives by mobilizing the caring power of local communities in Charlotte/Mecklenburg, Mooresville/Lake Norman, and Anson, Cabarrus and Union counties. For more information, please visit [uwcentralcarolinas.org](https://www.uwcentralcarolinas.org).

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#### Media Contact:

Timothy Hager, 704.973.4587 or [thager@fftc.org](mailto:thager@fftc.org)  
Shelly Ridgeway, 540.209.4886 or [sridgeway@uwcentralcarolinas.org](mailto:sridgeway@uwcentralcarolinas.org)