

Foundation For The Carolinas, Novant Health Foundation Dedicate New Convening Space in Honor of Late Philanthropic Leader, Dr. Ophelia Garmon-Brown*Gift from Novant Health Makes Possible The Garmon-Brown Board Room*

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Foundation For The Carolinas and Novant Health Foundation recently dedicated a new convening space at the Foundation’s uptown headquarters in honor of the late community and philanthropic leader, Dr. Ophelia Garmon-Brown. Novant Health Foundation made the upfit of the space possible through a gift honoring the significant contributions of Dr. Garmon-Brown, a longtime Novant Health executive.

A trailblazing physician, hospital executive and impassioned advocate, Garmon-Brown dedicated her life to improving the well-being of others, leading efforts to increase economic mobility and erase disparities in healthcare and education. The Garmon-Brown Board Room honors her legacy of convening community members to find consensus and address critical issues.

“Most knew Ophelia as a minister and missionary, a healer and advocate for all people. To me, she was a dear friend and mentor,” said Carl S. Armato, president and CEO of Novant Health. “Her inner light shined bright for all to see, and she lived out daily her belief that every person is valuable, born with inherent dignity that no circumstance can change. We are proud to honor her legacy by dedicating this space in remembrance of her lifelong work to heal, to strengthen and to unify our community.”

After graduating medical school at UNC-Chapel Hill, Dr. Garmon-Brown moved to Charlotte and became the community’s first female Black family medicine resident. An ordained Baptist minister and published author, she was also co-founder of Charlotte Community Health Clinic, a free clinic for uninsured patients. She later became chief community health and wellness executive at Novant Health. Dr. Garmon-Brown passed away in November 2021 from cancer.

Among her many notable civic contributions, Dr. Garmon-Brown chaired the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Leading on Opportunity Council, which was housed at the Foundation and created a study on upward mobility in the community. The council’s report – which Dr. Garmon-Brown helped write while undergoing cancer treatment – provided a road map to improving upward mobility and spawned the nonprofit Leading on Opportunity, also housed at FFTC.

Beginning this summer, the Garmon-Brown Board Room will be available for local and regional nonprofits to use free of charge during weekday business hours, like other Foundation meeting rooms. It is located on the ground floor of the Foundation’s headquarters at 220 North Tryon Street and holds 22 guests, with windows looking out on North Tryon Street and the Truist Center courtyard. For-profit businesses and others may also rent the space for meetings beginning this summer.

“When we designed the Levine Conference Center, the purpose was to curate meeting spaces where, every day, diverse groups could convene, solve problems, hold important discussions and uplift philanthropy,” said Laura Smith, FFTC’s interim president and CEO. “So it’s fitting our newest room is named after a woman who symbolized that ideal. Ophelia was a community leader who brought people together to form a consensus for the greater

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good, and her shepherding of the Leading on Opportunity report is a testament to that. She was also a dear friend to FFTC and a hero to us all.”

Located in uptown Charlotte, the Foundation’s Levine Conference Center serves as a convening space for the community. Its 18 art-filled conference rooms create a vibrant hub for dialogue and collaboration, hosting hundreds of meetings, events and retreats each year. The Garmon-Brown Board Room will complement these existing spaces by adding a ground-floor option with greater capacity for large meetings.

The conference center was named in honor of Sandra and Leon Levine and is part of the larger Luski-Gorelick Center for Philanthropy. For more information: sslaughter@fftc.org or fftc.org/220NorthTryon.

About Foundation For The Carolinas

Founded in 1958, Foundation For The Carolinas is the fifth-largest nonprofit community foundation in the country, serving donors and a broad range of charitable purposes in North and South Carolina. With assets of \$4 billion, FFTC’s mission is to inspire philanthropy and empower individuals to create a better community. Visit www.fftc.org.

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