CFT Invests in Future of Dallas.

$15 Million Grant for Public Safety, the Largest ever from W. W. Caruth, Jr. Foundation Fund

Communities Foundation of Texas has made an unprecedented investment in the City of Dallas. Charles J. Wyly, Jr., Chairman of the Board, announced at a press conference August 4 that a three-year, $15 million grant has been made from the W. W. Caruth, Jr. Foundation Fund of CFT to the Dallas Police Department to improve public safety.

Dallas City Mayor Laura Miller, City Manager Mary Suhm, and the Police Department’s full command and control officer corps, the police bagpipers, color guard and choir, and the canine, equestrian and helicopter units joined CFT trustees, officers and donors for the announcement ceremonies at the Mabel Peters Caruth Center.

The grant, the largest ever made from the W. W. Caruth, Jr. Foundation Fund, and the largest on record from a community foundation to any municipal police force in the United States, will be used initially to fund approximately $5 million in critical equipment needs outlined by Dallas Police Chief David Kunkle.

The remaining $10 million has been allocated to the DPD to study best police practices and to develop and implement a comprehensive strategic plan to reduce Dallas’ unacceptably high crime rate.

But the grant is not simply about fighting crime. As J. Cook, CFT vice president of grants, notes, “That would be too transitory. This is a grant, true to the remarkable legacy of Will Caruth, that is, instead, transforming. It’s about developing and sustaining a successful program to deliver public safety in Dallas.”

In honoring Mr. Caruth’s explicit commitment to public safety, CFT has previously funded a number of specific police department programs and equipment needs, but never anything so comprehensive or on such a scale as this grant. CFT trustees first learned of the opportunity to make their unique investment when immediate past

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In the wake of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, Communities Foundation of Texas so far has delivered over $1.3 million from donors in the North Texas area to both national and local relief efforts.

The Foundation’s prompt support for Gulf Coast storm victims illustrates the ability of a public charity to serve as a vehicle for an efficient, effective emergency response, says J. Cook, CFT vice president for grants. Several new designated charitable relief funds were opened, grants were made from CFT’s own unrestricted disaster relief fund, and a number of donor-advised funds provided necessary resources to relief agencies, in particular the American Red Cross and The Salvation Army.

Individual grants ranging from $200 to $250,000 were recommended by donors for the benefit of churches and other religious institutions, schools, and a broad range of relief organizations in accordance with each donor’s CFT fund agreement and the relevant tax law.

In the midst of this overwhelming charitable response, Congress changed the tax rules by enacting the 2005 Katrina Emergency Tax Relief Act. Designed to provide tax relief for storm victims, the legislation signed by President Bush September 23 also contains significant tax incentives for charitable giving, including contributions to community foundations like CFT.

As always, Communities Foundation of Texas recommends that donors consult with their personal advisors and tax consultants about specific gifts and, in particular, about the effect of the Katrina Emergency Tax Relief Act.

Corporations also stand to benefit from the suspension of the charitable contribution limitation, but exclusively for donations to hurricane relief efforts.  

Your Gifts in Action

Providing Relief.

Help for Hurricane Victims and New Giving Rules for Donors

Christopher challenged CFT donors never to have tried to succeed. “It is hard to fail; but it is worse never to have tried to succeed.”

Concurring with that charge, Mr. Christopher challenged the trustees, officers and staff, donors and guests to join him in “daring mighty things” with CFT. He cited Roosevelt’s admonition, “daring mighty things” with CFT. He cited Roosevelt’s admonition, “It is hard to fail; but it is worse never to have tried to succeed.”

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The goal is lofty: to increase high school graduation and college enrollment rates in Texas. And the purpose is real: to ensure an educated workforce, a robust economy, and strong rural and urban communities in Texas.

The $120 million vehicle for achieving these new standards and reversing the national failure of secondary education to prepare students for college and the workplace is the Texas High School Project. The project is a unique public-private partnership involving Communities Foundation of Texas, the Texas Education Agency, the Office of the Governor, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation, among others.

THSP is headquartered in the Mabel Peters Caruth Center at CFT’s invitation, where THSP Executive Director John Fitzpatrick oversees the $60 million private philanthropic investment operations. The Texas Education Agency coordinates the $60 million public investment.

Focusing on high-need and urban high schools, THSP is providing the funding and technical assistance to fundamentally change and improve high school education. Its first grants have been made to schools in the Rio Grande Valley. Ultimately, 75 new or re-organized high schools will be developed across the state to challenge all students with a rigorous, engaging curriculum and to support them with strong adult relationships. In addition, THSP is providing educator training and professional development opportunities.

Research shows that high schools across the country, including those in Texas, are not preparing even a majority of students for college and career success in the 21st century economy. When he came on board with THSP, Fitzpatrick, a former teacher and champion of educational reform who currently serves as a trustee in the Austin Independent School District, said, “I am excited to have the opportunity to break the mold. We are supporting innovative ways to help thousands of high school students across Texas reach their dreams, including college, productive citizenship and rewarding careers.”

Other members of the Texas High School Project team are: Paula Peters, Chief Operating Officer; Alma G. Garcia, Director, Early College High Schools; Sarah J. Kirby, Director, Educational Leadership Initiative; Fred Richardson, Director of High School Redesign; and Mary K. Wells, Director of the New Schools Initiative.

What the First $5 Million Will Buy the DPD
- Mobile Video Recorders for Squad Cars
- Vehicle Barriers
- Computers and Software
- Special Ballistic Vests
- Cell Phones
- Wireless Network

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chairman of the board Ruth Altshuler attended a meeting of foundations sponsored by Safer Dallas, Better Dallas and hosted by the Meadows Foundation. As the civic leaders there delineated the DPD’s immediate equipment needs, Mrs. Altshuler recognized that the community’s need to address its staggering public safety statistics was a perfect “fit” for CFT’s W.W. Caruth, Jr. Foundation Fund resources. In ensuing discussions with Police Chief David Kunkle, the City of Dallas, and Jack Hammack and Charles Terrell of Safer Dallas, Better Dallas, the trustees realized that to make a real, lasting difference – the kind that Will Caruth always advocated – they would need to make a bold commitment beyond equipment by marshaling additional expertise and support.

“The timing was right,” Mr. Wyly explains. “The resources were available. Command leadership was in place. Our intention is to empower the Dallas Police Department – using new equipment, training and expertise – to improve public safety and restore community confidence.”

Mayor Laura Miller thanked the Foundation for its investment and for entrusting the City to meet its challenge. At a City Hall ceremony in September, the Mayor also issued an official proclamation honoring Communities Foundation of Texas for its leadership and support. She said the City shares CFT’s hope that its investment will serve as a model for additional philanthropic commitments and for collaborative public safety efforts across the country.
As trustees unveiled the exquisite new portrait of Communities Foundation of Texas benefactor Mabel Peters Caruth in the grand lobby of the Mabel Peters Caruth Center, her eldest son, Bill Caruth, turned to the renowned portrait artist Everett Raymond Kinstler and said, “Thank you for helping us remember someone we could never forget.”

Indeed, remembering Mabel Caruth and her extraordinary generosity is what the artist’s rare posthumous portrait is all about. Inscribed on the plaque accompanying the painting are the words of long-time CFT tax counsel and Caruth friend, Vester Hughes: “May her gracious manner and spirit be a part of all that takes place within these walls.”

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According to CFT trustee Linda Pitts Custard, who, with interim executive director Jack Kinnebrew and Mr. Hughes, selected Mr. Kinstler, the portrait was commissioned as a further tribute to the woman whose $34 million bequest made the Foundation’s new headquarters facility possible. The portrait hangs on a naturally-lighted wall space building architects created specifically for this work of art. Its placement in the grand lobby of the Mabel Peters Caruth Center was instrumental, Mr. Kinstler said, in his accepting the commission to paint Mrs. Caruth.

Ray Kinstler worked two years on the painting of Mrs. Caruth, “getting to know her” from conversations with CFT trustees and staff and her sons, and by studying 50 years of photographs and a video. After reviewing CFT’s archive of Caruth family photographs, he selected only five to take back to his studio in New York. From these, which now bear smudge marks from the artist’s oils, the essence of Mabel Caruth emerged on his canvas.

“My painting took on a life of its own,” he said, as he explained the process required to succeed with posthumous portraiture. “And it aged from week to week. It started at about age 35, but her face got much more interesting as she got older.

“I studied what she wore, and the way she moved. I was aware that she loved flowers. I wanted to incorporate her vivaciousness and the quality of her eyes. She smiles a lot,” he said. “And there’s a warmth about her.”

“I could never ‘know’ her as you knew her,” he conceded, modestly, and with notable regret.

“But I wanted to be able to convey some aspect of this lady so that someone who didn’t know her would wish they had.”

Mr. Kinstler’s latest book, My Brush with History, includes the new portrait of Mrs. Caruth among the artist’s favorites.®
CFT Distributes $67.4 Million in Grants.

Communities
Foundation of Texas has had another extraordinary year of grant-making.

On behalf of its donors, both those who advise trustees of their philanthropic intentions and those whose legacies inform the trustees’ decisions, the Foundation distributed $67.4 million to agencies, organizations and projects in Dallas, throughout Texas, and across the country. The grants from the Foundation’s funds for which there are no longer any advisors living ranged from a five-year $250,000 grant to the St. Paul Medical Foundation for a new Heart, Lung, and Vascular Clinical Center of Excellence and $175,000 to the Visiting Nurses Association’s capital campaign to provide technology training for its nurses, to $35,000 to re-roof the Thanksgiving Square chapel and $10,000 to The Oak Hill Academy for playground equipment. A $100,000 endowment was created at CFT for Austin College by the Katie Foundation Fund to provide for maintenance and equipment costs of the John A. and Katherine G. Jackson Technology Center.

Gifts from the Foundation’s donor-advised funds included $500,000 granted to the Baylor Research Institute for scientific research; over $2,000,000 on the recommendation of Richard and Mary Anne Cree for construction of the Rosine Smith Sammons Butterfly Gardens and Insectarium at the Texas Discovery Gardens in Fair Park; and $200,000 from the Lee and Albert Hall Fund to the School of Engineering at Southern Methodist University. Distributions from anonymous funds and the Barrett Foundation Fund accounted for $135,000 to the Dallas Morning News Charities.

Outside of Texas, Johns Hopkins University received a $1,300,000 grant from The Boone Pickens Foundation – a Communities of Texas through EFNT. According to EFNT CEO Jim Byrne, “Our members’ forward-thinking actions give the Foundation, and the community it serves, future access to potential philanthropic resources not readily available through traditional means.”

Because the gifts are made when a company’s stock has relatively low value, the gift has little or no impact on an enterprise’s critical earnings or operating cash, Byrne explains. The benefit accrues when the company experiences a “liquidity event” (a public offering or acquisition), after which EFNT sells its then- valuable shares. The bulk of the proceeds are distributed to charity, and the company, like other CFT donors, is encouraged to advise trustees of its preferred philanthropic commitments. In addition, the company realizes the relevant tax advantages.

“EFNT gives philanthropy a very real interest in the high tech, start-up and other emerging markets, while providing a vehicle for today’s successful entrepreneurs to make meaningful contributions to their community,” says Dick Agnich, chairman of the EFNT board of directors. As Byrne notes, “The timing is right for a new wave of good corporate citizenship.”

The entrepreneurs’ contributions are not limited to stock and stock options. EFNT also coordinates volunteer efforts among members’ employees, celebrates individuals and companies that “are doing well by doing good,” and promotes networking.

The 4th annual 2005 Spirit of Entrepreneurship event, for example, attracted...
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more than 300 business, political and community leaders to CFT’s Mabel Peters Caruth Center to hear keynote speaker Roger Staubach champion philanthropy and community involvement.
EFNT’s Freedom Day, held annually to commemorate the tragedy of September 11th with acts of kindness and generosity, this year involved 360 volunteers from 30 different companies in what EFNT’s director Pam Gerber calls “transformative service.” They painted 11,000 square feet of walls and ceilings, tore down and rebuilt 400 square feet of wooden fence, scraped, primed and painted 400 feet of metal railing, demolished 30 square feet of dilapidated sidewalk and gave hope to scores of homeless people served by the Interfaith Housing Coalition and the Wilkinson Center in East Dallas. A third team of EFNT volunteers helped remove graffiti from nine sites across the city.

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