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Contact: Peter Van Dyke
Van Dyke Horn Public Relations
peter@vandykehorn.com
P: 313-872-2202

The Hudson-Webber Foundation Announces Shift in Funding Strategies, Focusing on Approaches to Achieve Shared Prosperity for All Detroiters

Detroit – The Hudson-Webber Foundation is announcing a change in approach to its philanthropic investments in Detroit. Under a newly-developed strategy, the foundation will focus investments on organizations, programs and initiatives that help achieve sustainable, broad-based prosperity in the city. The strategy centers around creating access and opportunities for residents to attain quality jobs, housing, and safe, thriving neighborhoods.

Over the past decade, the foundation, with origins in the city dating back 78 years, has concentrated its investments in Greater Downtown. The foundation focused on intensive efforts to position the city to retain and attract residents and jobs through increased density and vibrancy in the urban core.

“There have been profound changes over the last 10 years in the Greater Downtown that have built upon the city’s strong cultural and physical assets, and these transformations better position our city and region to be successful in a 21st century economy,” said Melanca Clark, The Hudson-Webber Foundation’s President and CEO. “The foundation will continue to support important work happening in the core. To build on this momentum, and to help ensure that all residents benefit from the city’s growth, we will also make investments in neighborhoods outside the core, and with investments that are systemic in scope.”

Clark emphasizes that addressing structural barriers to opportunity for people of color will be a high priority for the foundation’s investments.

In conjunction with this new approach, the foundation is announcing four reframed mission areas in which it will focus its activities and investment. These are: Community and Economic Development, Built Environment, Arts and Culture, and Safe and Just Communities. Across these mission areas, Hudson-Webber Foundation will engage in policy and research activities.

“The addition of policy and research activities to support our mission areas acknowledges that achieving the desired pace and magnitude of community change, whether in criminal justice, economic development, housing affordability, or even the arts, often requires systemic or structural changes that can only be brought about through policy decisions,” said Clark.

This is not the foundation’s first foray into addressing system change that has impact at the

neighborhood level. The foundation made significant investments in neighborhood stabilization, workforce development, and criminal justice reforms in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

“There is a strong and growing network of foundations, corporate and civic leaders, and community organizations working to address these challenges,” said Clark. “Now, working hand and hand with others is the perfect time to engage these critical issues.”

“The Hudson-Webber Foundation was founded on the principle of improving quality of life in Detroit, and throughout our history, to achieve this objective, we have consistently adapted our approach to respond to the changing needs of an evolving city,” said Jennifer Hudson Parke, chair of the foundation’s board. “We are fortunate to have a dedicated board and staff with the expertise and leadership to steward this new strategy and build upon the foundation’s legacy.”

The foundation will concentrate its efforts and resources in the City of Detroit with a focus on empowering human capital, stimulating the vitality of place, seeking innovative approaches that lead to increased prosperity for new and existing Detroiters, and addressing persistent racial inequities and structural barriers to opportunity.

The Hudson-Webber Foundation grants approximately \$7 million annually. In the last year, the foundation has begun to make grants that are exemplary of its future direction in funding strategies.

Community and Economic Development

- Develop Detroit, Inc. is receiving \$1 million to support affordable and mixed-income housing development in targeted Detroit neighborhoods.
- Invest Detroit is receiving \$1 million for the Strategic Neighborhood Fund to make catalytic real estate investments in three Detroit neighborhoods.
- Community Reinvestment Fund is receiving \$150,000 for the Detroit Home Mortgage Program to increase access to home loans in Detroit neighborhoods.

Safe and Just Communities

- The Wayne State University is receiving \$45,000 to support the Detroit Police Department’s operation of the Ceasefire program to reduce violence in Detroit neighborhoods in partnership with the City of Detroit.

Policy and Research

- The Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies is receiving \$20,000 to develop economic policy research and solutions tailored to the unique challenges and opportunities in historically marginalized communities, including hosting a roundtable of Midwest political leadership in Detroit.

The Hudson-Webber Foundation origins date back to 1939 with major contributions from Mr. and Mrs. Richard H. Webber, other members of the Webber family, and The J.L. Hudson Company. The foundation is governed by a 13-member board of trustees, with assets of approximately \$170 million, and has contributed over \$200 million to improve the quality of life in Detroit. The mission

areas of the foundation include support of community and economic development, the built environment, safe and just communities, and arts and culture.

To learn more about The Hudson-Webber Foundation, visit www.hudson-webber.org.

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