

Hoffberger Announces New Giving Priorities and Executive Director

Family Foundation to focus on Economic Mobility and Childhood Trauma

BALTIMORE — The Hoffberger Family Philanthropies today announced the hiring of a new Executive Director and the establishment of new program priorities for the Hoffberger Foundation, centering on economic mobility and children’s mental health in Baltimore. These new areas of focus are the result of a year-long strategic planning process. The Hoffberger Family Fund, an allied charity, will continue to focus its giving on Jewish causes.

“This is an exciting new direction,” said Alison Fass, President of the foundation. “Our long-range goal is for local children and families to enjoy greater economic prosperity and personal stability, both individually and among generations.”

The board of the Hoffberger Foundation engaged GMA Foundations last year to assist in the process of developing its next strategic plan. The board and its consultant met with nonprofit and philanthropic leaders across Greater Baltimore, looking for opportunities to connect long-held family values to emerging community needs.

Although unemployment in Baltimore decreased in recent years, going from 7.7% in 2015 to 4.7% in February of 2020, the unemployment rate has hovered above 11% since early spring. According to the Mayor’s Office of Employment Development, as many as 1 in 3 adults were unemployed in multiple Baltimore City zip codes before the Covid-19 outbreak due to long-standing concerns including prior incarceration and lack of transportation.

“Securing a job is only part of the issue,” said Fass. “We anticipate a focus on reducing systemic barriers to employment and increasing supports for job-seekers.”

As unemployment in Baltimore City outpaces state and national averages, exposure to adverse childhood experiences remains alarmingly high. A 2015 Census Bureau survey found 19% of city residents experienced sexual abuse as children compared to 11% across the state of Maryland. Twenty-nine percent of those surveyed experienced or witnessed domestic violence compared to 17% percent statewide. According Maryland’s Public Behavioral Health System, 42% of Baltimore adults experienced three or more adverse experiences as children, which has been found to impact economic mobility.

“We’re implementing a phased approach,” said Terrill North, newly-appointed Executive Director of the foundation. “Our immediate focus will be on economic mobility as we learn more about opportunities to address trauma and toxic stress impacting children and caregivers.”

Terrill North most recently served as Executive Director of the Collaboration Council for Children, Youth, and Families, the Local Management Board for Montgomery County. Mr. North was previously Board Vice-President of the ACLU of Maryland.

“Our board is looking forward to the energy, enthusiasm, and experience Terrill brings to our work,” said Fass. “We anticipate his work and life experience will help to inform our grantmaking in a positive, creative, and sensitive way.”

The foundation is not accepting unsolicited proposals at this time.

About Hoffberger Family Philanthropies: The Hoffberger Family Philanthropies are led by descendants of Charles and Sarah Hoffberger, Jewish immigrants who established Baltimore as their home in the late 19th century. The Hoffberger Foundation was established in 1941, providing support that strengthens communities, eases barriers to opportunity, and has a positive impact on the well-being of individuals who live in impoverished neighborhoods. The Hoffberger Family Fund was established in 1980 to support the Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore. For more information, please visit www.hoffberger.org.

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