



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
February 13, 2023

CONTACT:
Rebecca Abrahamson
Senior Manager, Communications
941-556-7122 | rabrahamson@cfsarasota.org

“Season of Sharing” Surpasses \$3.67 Million in Donations in 23rd Annual Campaign

Six matching gifts totaling \$600,000 contributed by The Patterson Foundation enhance the millions provided by the community to support neighbors in need all year long.

SARASOTA, FL – Building on more than two decades of community generosity, the annual “Season of Sharing” campaign raised \$3.67 million to help people experiencing financial crisis in Sarasota, Manatee, Charlotte and DeSoto counties.

Now in its 23rd year, the campaign has restored security and peace of mind for more than 44,500 individuals and families from Punta Gorda to Parrish by providing more than \$38 million to assist with housing, utilities, childcare, and transportation.

“Once again, the generous outpouring of support from our community has been heartening and a testimony to the trust people have in this safety net, and the belief that each person—no matter their means—can help their neighbors at critical moments,” said Roxie Jerde, President and CEO of the Community Foundation. “Season of Sharing is a great example of how much we can accomplish when we work together.”

Some of those who contributed to the success of the campaign are the brave families who shared their stories of despair and how Season of Sharing helped them regain stability. Written by a reporter dedicated by the Herald Tribune to explore the personal stories of those dealing with hardships that allow a point of human connection to Season of Sharing’s impact.

"People who read the profiles of families who have been assisted by Season of Sharing that we publish in the Herald-Tribune realize that we all share similar hopes and dreams, and we all struggle," said Jennifer Orsi, Executive Editor of the Sarasota Herald-Tribune. "The profiles also show how Season of Sharing – through the generosity of our community – helps thousands of families in our community find their way through their struggles."

This year marks the third consecutive year that longtime philanthropic partner, The Patterson Foundation, surpassed a half million dollars in support through matching opportunities, contributing \$100,000 for every \$500,000 raised by the community. With no cap on the number of \$100,000 contributions donors could activate prior to January 31, the community electrified this opportunity to strengthen their charitable giving and sparked six such contributions totaling \$600,000. The Patterson Foundation has supported Season of Sharing for 13 years, with the past three years delivering a record breaking \$1.9 million.

"This latest iteration of Season of Sharing began at a time when many were working to regain their own stability following Hurricane Ian's impact on the Suncoast," said Debra Jacobs, President and CEO of The Patterson Foundation. "The vibrancy with which our region embraced Season of Sharing throughout that time and into the new year demonstrates a greater awareness of the opportunity we all have to help people maintain their security and dignity amid life's unforeseen challenges. We are grateful to have played a part in sparking their inspiring generosity."

In the year to come, the \$3.67 million raised will be distributed with thoughtfulness and urgency, covering expenses – such as rental and mortgage assistance, utilities, childcare, and transportation – that could otherwise leave people without a permanent roof over their heads. All contributions are directly applied to requests for help.

With Hurricane Ian exacerbating an already severe affordable housing crisis, Season of Sharing money has been essential in helping many families left without a home in the wake of the storm. The storm's unprecedented damage to the gulf coast opened a floodgate of charitable giving through countless organizations for immediate and longer-term assistance. The Community Foundation and The Patterson Foundation activated the Suncoast Disaster Recovery Fund in the days prior to Ian's landfall, which raised nearly \$5 million in 90 days; those contributions are being directed to systemic changes to prepare for future disasters across our region, while Season of Sharing gifts are immediately available for individuals in need. "We are so thankful we had Season of Sharing in place to help those people whose lives were turned upside down by Hurricane Ian," says Jerde. "With so much giving to aid in relief and recovery from Ian, there was some question about how strong the turnout for Season of Sharing could be. This shows our community's generosity really is limitless."

While fundraising for the campaign officially runs from November through January, support provided by Season of Sharing is counted on all year long and quickly distributed through a network of more than 50 human services agencies to assist those in need. Donations to the Season of Sharing fund are accepted all year and may be made online at www.cfsarasota.org/community-impact/community-care/season-of-sharing or by sending a check (payable to Community Foundation of Sarasota County) to Attn: Season of Sharing, 2635 Fruitville Road, Sarasota, FL 34237. There are no administrative fees and 100 percent of your gift goes to helping go directly to those who need it most, with none of the proverbial "red tape." All donations are tax-deductible.

For 23 years, Season of Sharing has had the staying power to restore confidence and hope for neighbors in crisis, with support from our community. Built on collaboration and trust, the community-wide campaign is a partnership between the Community Foundation of Sarasota County and the Sarasota Herald-Tribune, with giving strengthened by The Patterson Foundation since 2010. To read stories from families and individuals who have been helped throughout this year by Season of Sharing, visit www.heraldtribune.com.

###

About the Community Foundation of Sarasota County: The Community Foundation of Sarasota County is a public charity founded in 1979 by the Southwest Florida Estate Planning Council as a resource for caring individuals and the causes they support, enabling them to make a charitable impact on the community. With assets of \$460 million in more than 1,570 charitable funds, the Community Foundation awarded grants and scholarships totaling \$45.3 million dollars last year in the areas of education, the arts, health and human services, civic engagement, animal welfare and the environment. Since its founding, the Community Foundation has been able to grant more than \$396 million to area nonprofit organizations in our community thanks to the generosity of charitable individuals, families, and businesses. For more information, visit www.CFSarasota.org or call (941) 955-3000.