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## **“Season of Sharing” Surpasses \$4.2 Million in Donations in 24<sup>th</sup> Annual Campaign**

*Seven matching gifts totaling \$700,000 contributed by The Patterson Foundation enhance the millions provided by the community to support neighbors in need all year long.*

**SARASOTA, FL** – Thanks to an abundance of community generosity, the annual “Season of Sharing” campaign raised \$4.21 million to help people experiencing financial crisis in Sarasota, Manatee, Charlotte and DeSoto counties. This is the second-highest annual amount raised since Season of Sharing was established in 2000 by the Community Foundation of Sarasota County and the Sarasota Herald-Tribune to provide a safety net for neighbors in crisis. During the last three months, more than 2,600 gifts were given by donors of all means to offer stability for those on the economic edge in our region.

Now in its 24th year, the campaign has restored security and peace of mind for nearly 49,000 households from Punta Gorda to Parrish by providing more than \$43.5 million to assist with housing, utilities, childcare, and transportation.

“It is so uplifting to see how year after year Season of Sharing affirms our community’s generous nature and that we have dedicated, vibrant supporters and nonprofit partners who are changing our community for the better,” said Roxie Jerde, President and CEO of the Community Foundation. “Season of Sharing demonstrates how much we can accomplish when we work together to transform lives, whatever our means.”

Some of those who contributed to the success of the campaign are the people who candidly shared their struggles and how Season of Sharing helped them find stability with the support of neighbors they likely will never meet. Written by a reporter dedicated by the *Sarasota 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, these stories have inspired hope and giving. Those who shared their stories are just a few of the thousands who are helped each year.

This year marks the fourth 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 seven such contributions totaling \$700,000. The Patterson Foundation has supported Season of Sharing for 15 years, and in the past three years alone has provided \$2 million in response to broad community support.

"The idea of 'Neighbors helping neighbors' goes beyond just words; it captures the very heart of our community's spirit. The generosity we are witnessing in the current 'Season of Sharing' campaign is truly heartwarming," said Debra Jacobs, President and CEO of The Patterson Foundation. "This is a reminder of how we can transform challenges into opportunities for support and connection, ultimately fostering a more resilient community. While we celebrate the remarkable achievements of the campaign, we recognize that the needs in our community persist and are growing. As we confront these ongoing challenges, let's continue to nurture this spirit of generosity, ensuring that our community remains a place where support and hope are always within reach."

In the year to come, the \$4.21 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 and the ability to work. All contributions are directly applied to requests for help, disbursed to landlords, utility services, childcare centers, and auto mechanic shops.

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 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](http://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 24 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](http://www.heraldtribune.com).

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**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 \$489 million in more than 1,580 charitable funds, the Community Foundation awarded grants and scholarships totaling \$40 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 \$435.8 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](http://www.CFSarasota.org) or call (941) 955-3000.