



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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**Community Foundation of Sarasota County “Parent Leadership Grant”
Opened March 1**

The grant encourages nonprofit organizations to incorporate parent voice in decision-making.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE— The Community Foundation of Sarasota County has opened a new grant opportunity that invites nonprofit organizations to focus on using lived expertise as a key consideration in developing programs meant to empower families.

The grant opportunity, which connects the Foundation’s “2Gen Philosophy” with its funding priorities encourages nonprofits to include parents in positions of leadership, counsel, and decision-making. The grant application will close April 1, 2024.

The 2Gen—or two-generational—approach to family well-being strives to disrupt intergenerational cycles of poverty through focusing on children and the adults in their lives, simultaneously and intentionally.

“Nonprofits are seeking ways or have asked for resources to empower parent participation in their work. Our goal is to build organizations’ capacity to amplify parent voice and respect their contributions,” said Kirsten Russell, Vice President of Community Impact at the Community Foundation. “These parents have unique expertise on what is needed and how help can be the most impactful.”

During a regional 2Gen Summit hosted by the Community Foundation in February that welcomed more than 250 guests, the importance of lived expertise was emphasized through a panel of parents that shared their journeys from economic and social instability to now: having gained higher education, leading to higher paying, stable careers. The panel included many ideas stemming from this journey—including juggling education with raising children and, often, employment outside of the home. The panel had unique experience in stretching dollars and resources to hold everything together until new opportunities became open to them. Participants dispensed recommendations on what would have been helpful and what could be of critical assistance to parents facing a similar journey.

In 2012, the Community Foundation began to work with Ascend at the Aspen Institute, the global catalyst of the 2Gen Approach and convener of policymakers, practitioners, and parents, with the goal of weaving family-centered policy and programs into systems.

Since then, the Community Foundation has rooted its work in 2Gen strategies, which focus on key components of family well-being, including education (early childhood, K-12, and postsecondary), financial security, mental and physical health, and social capital, or the network of human support that can encourage and help individuals.

Commitment to 2Gen family empowerment led the Community Foundation to form in 2019 a Parent Advisory Council (PAC), which contributes important ideas and offers feedback on proposals. Members of the PAC have presented for the Community Foundation's Board of Directors and the council is a main stakeholder in related initiatives. PAC members will serve as the review committee for the grant cycle.

"The Community Foundation has learned so much from our Parent Advisory Council, and we believe their vantage point is critical in evaluating proposals," Russell said. "We anticipate organizations will come to realize the value and importance of including parents in decision-making and this vital input is woven into strategies."

Qualifying for the grant can take many forms, from creating a Parent Advisory Council (PAC) that contributes feedback on proposed strategies to incorporating a focus on parent/family experiences in staff training. Average grant awards will be \$2,500 to \$7,500, and funding should include compensation to parents serving in leadership or training capacities.

The deadline for applying is April 1, 2024, and successful applications will be notified in June. For more information about this grant opportunity, please visit [CFSarasota.org](https://www.CFSarasota.org).

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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 or call (941) 955-3000.