

*A message from William S. White, Chairman and CEO,
and Ridgway H. White, President*

A photograph of four young Black children participating in a tug-of-war competition. They are sitting on the grass, leaning back, and pulling on a thick rope. The children are dressed in casual clothing, including t-shirts and shorts. The background is a lush green field with trees in the distance.

PARTNERING FOR PROGRESS

CHARLES STEWART MOTT FOUNDATION

One of Charles Stewart Mott's most strongly held beliefs was that every person exists in a kind of informal partnership with his or her community. For nearly nine decades, this belief has guided the foundation that bears his name and shaped the work we do.

This concept of partnership has a couple of simple, yet powerful underpinnings. The first can be thought of as a virtuous cycle. When individuals succeed and give back, their community flourishes. And when a community is strong and prosperous, it cultivates opportunity for the individuals who live and work there. The success of each strengthens the other.

The second relates to the power to make positive change. When people become engaged and work in partnership with their communities, they can bridge social, cultural and economic divides, and — together — address seemingly intractable problems.

We have seen this firsthand in our hometown of Flint — from the earliest days of the Foundation, when the biggest challenges were born of the need to provide services to a rapidly expanding population, to the current day, when the reverse is true. After a decades-long decline in population, the city has fewer resources to deliver services to residents across a still-sprawling area. It is because good people and organizations continue to

"It seems to me that every person, always, is in a kind of informal partnership with his community."

— CHARLES STEWART MOTT, 1875–1973

work together in partnership for the benefit of the community that we are confident Flint will continue to move forward through hard times to new opportunities.

Our work over the years has taught us additional truths about communities, including that they often are defined in the social sense by attributes other than geographic boundaries. A community may be made up of individuals

Students play tug of war during a field day at Brownell-Holmes STEM Academy, the pilot site for a new model of community education in Flint, Michigan.

When individuals partner with — and embrace — their communities, help, hope and opportunity result.

who live oceans apart, yet share a common characteristic, interest or concern. Or it may comprise various organizations and institutions working toward a joint purpose or goal.

We also have learned that the stubbornness and complexity of the issues we seek to address, whether in Flint or elsewhere around the world, mean they will not be resolved quickly or easily. It takes time and hard work for meaningful, sustainable change to take root. It requires the active collaboration of people and organizations to identify shared concerns and opportunities, explore and test potential approaches, and create solutions that meet the unique needs of their community.

And we have learned that no single institution has the knowledge, resources or agility to single-handedly address complex social issues. That power must lay in the collective hands, hearts and minds of people working together, often in new and creative ways, to make good things happen.

We've had a focus on strengthening partnerships between individuals and communities since our earliest days of grantmaking, and this approach is still evident in grants we made in 2014 across our four program areas: Civil Society, Education, Environment and Flint Area.

For example, in the 1930s Mr. Mott played an instrumental role in creating Flint's "lighted schoolhouse" model of community education, which brought together multiple partners to provide area residents with academic and enrichment programs after the day's last school bell rang and the sun went down. This model not only changed the way Flint residents engaged with their schools, it also helped to launch a national movement for community education.

Eight decades later, a community planning exercise revealed that Flint residents' top priority was bringing a newly imagined model of community schools to the city. In 2014, we responded by providing a \$330,000 grant through our Flint Area program to the Crim Fitness Foundation, which collaborated with the Flint Community Schools, other local organizations and residents to pilot a new model at a two-school elementary campus in the city. We hope this new partnership will result in a 21st century model of community education that can be expanded within our local school district, as well as insights that can inform national and international efforts. Overall, the Foundation awarded \$430 million in grants between 1935 and 2014 — more than \$1 billion in today's dollars — to advance community education in our hometown of Flint and around the world.

The After-School All-Stars, one of our Education grantees, also engages



Volunteers at Euclid Beach Park in Cleveland are among thousands who participate in annual beach cleanup events in all eight Great Lakes states.

individuals, families, communities and schools to work in partnership. The organization provides comprehensive afterschool programs designed to keep kids safe and help them succeed in school and life. In 2014, its 10th year of support from Mott, the organization received two Foundation grants totaling \$525,000.

In total, Mott awarded nearly \$215 million in grants between 1998 and 2014 to help increase access to quality afterschool programs for all children in the United States, especially those in underserved communities. Together with other funders and advocates, we helped scale the federal government's 21st Century Community Learning Centers initiative from a small pilot project to the largest afterschool grant program in U.S. history, currently serving nearly 1.7 million children in more than 11,000 schools. We also support statewide afterschool

networks in all 50 states. We believe this work is critical to providing educational opportunity because research has demonstrated that regular participation in quality afterschool programs helped to narrow the achievement gap in math between students from high-income and low-income families, improved academic and behavioral outcomes, and reduced absenteeism.

Connecting people and communities is also key to restoring and protecting freshwater resources in the Great Lakes region, which is an important aim of our Environment program. The Alliance for the Great Lakes is just one of our grantees who builds those connections. Each year, the Alliance's Adopt-a-Beach program draws more than 10,000 volunteers to remove litter and debris from shorelines in all eight Great Lakes states. In 2014, we awarded two grants

totaling \$335,000 to the Alliance. Overall, the Foundation awarded more than \$65 million in grants from 2000 to 2014 for work on Great Lakes issues.

As 2014 marked the 20th anniversary of the end of apartheid in South Africa, a number of our Civil Society grantees strengthened their resolve to ensure that every individual has a chance to participate in the nation's young democracy. At the forefront of that effort are community advice offices (CAOs), where paralegals strive daily to help people in underserved, rural areas protect their land, access essential services, and take part in the decisions that govern their lives. Mott's related funding has totaled nearly \$26 million since 1991, including grants in 2014 totaling \$400,000 to the National Alliance for the Development of

Community Advice Offices. During that year, Mott funds helped to support 200 of the country's 312 CAOs in eight of the country's nine provinces.

Each of the organizations mentioned above is doing critically important work. What's equally important is *how* they are doing it — by helping individuals step forward, become partners with their communities, and create meaningful change.

In the Special Section of this report, you will find inspiring portraits of such individuals. A grandmother volunteering at a community school in Flint. A young woman who attended the After-School All-Stars program during junior high and is now striving to give back during her first year of college. A man whose volunteer experience turned him into a passionate protector of the Great Lakes. And a

Seth Mnguni (left) and Julius Letlhogonolo Malekutu help to operate a community advice office in Mabopane, Pretoria. It's one of more than 300 offices providing legal counsel and advocacy to underserved communities across South Africa.



PHOTO CREDIT: JENN WARREN



Ridgway H. White (left) and William S. White shake hands on December 16, 2014, when it was announced that the Board of Trustees of the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation had appointed Ridgway as the Foundation's president.

paralegal in South Africa who is working to ensure that the voices of people living in underserved communities are heard. Their stories demonstrate the help, hope and opportunity that can result when people are willing to partner with — and embrace — their communities.

Before we leave you to enjoy those stories, we'd be remiss if we didn't touch on a new way in which we're working in partnership within the Foundation. 2014 marked the start of significant transitions at Mott that have carried into 2015. Most significant is that we have a new president of the Foundation for the first time in 39 years, while the chairman and CEO remains on the job. That means we are leading the Foundation together. You'll find more on the Board of Trustees' appointment of

Ridgway White as the Foundation's fourth president, as well as other transitions in our leadership team and program areas, under Staff News on page 60.

What's important to know is that we believe we have a leadership team and staff at every level who are poised to help our Foundation meet the challenges of the ever-changing environment in which we work, ensuring that our good intentions will be matched by accomplishments that contribute to a more just, equitable and sustainable world. ■

William S. White
Chairman and CEO

Ridgway H. White
President