



## Ford Fund Opens Innovative Community Center in Detroit, Invests \$5 Million to Expand Neighborhood Access to Services

- Ford Motor Company Fund is opening a second Ford Resource and Engagement Center in Detroit, providing essential needs and services to east side residents
- The new center, located in a Detroit middle school, will concentrate on education, job training and business development in the neighborhood
- Ford and Ford Fund invest more than \$20 million a year in education, job training, diversity, arts, culture and safe driving programs in Detroit and southeast Michigan

**DETROIT, Oct. 6, 2017** – Today, Ford Motor Company Fund opens a new Ford Resource and Engagement Center on Detroit’s east side – increasing access to essential needs and services, as well as economic opportunities in one of the city’s most underserved neighborhoods. The \$5 million community center, located at Fisher Magnet Upper Academy, is managed by the Detroit Public Schools Foundation. Programs will emphasize education, job training, workforce development, and investments focused on the next generation of Detroiters.

This newest Ford Resource and Engagement Center provides services to thousands of students and residents in the area with the help of at least 18 nonprofit community groups. Services offered include a food distribution hub, legal assistance, job training and workforce development, and workshops supporting business startups. Ford’s STEAM Lab will be available, providing the science, technology, engineering, arts and math curriculum necessary for young people seeking high-demand jobs in the future.

In addition to bolstering educational opportunities for area children and supporting local businesses, the new engagement center is helping bring the community together with arts, music and cultural activities to lift the quality of life for neighborhood residents. The 10,000-square-foot facility features interactive and collaborative workspaces, as well as a main hallway inspired by social mobility and reimaged to look like a thriving Seven Mile Road through the community.

“Our newest Ford Resource and Engagement Center represents our ongoing commitment to projects in neighborhoods that are transformational in nature,” said Jim Vella, president, Ford Motor Company Fund. “We want to harness the untapped potential in our schools and neighborhoods to help more people gain access to the benefits of a stronger, more prosperous Detroit.”

“The decision made by Ford Fund to create the Ford Resource and Engagement Center in a traditional public school reflects the reality that there are few, if any, stronger investments to ensure impact, scale and sustainability within a neighborhood or community,” said Nikolai Vitti, superintendent, Detroit Public Schools. “This multifaceted investment will benefit multiple community members and more profoundly, generations. For the school, it allows learning to become more interactive – more community-based and project-based – and, frankly, more relevant for all students.”

The new center, the second in the city, is modeled after the original Ford Resource and Engagement Center that opened four years ago at Mexicantown Mercado in southwest Detroit.

The first one has become an anchor in the vibrant community, assisting more than 85,000 people with food distribution, tax return preparation, education and job initiatives, legal assistance and other programs.

The original Resource and Engagement Center has returned \$3 in services to the local community for every \$1 invested by Ford and participating nonprofits. A third Ford Resource and Engagement Center, in South Africa, offers job training and entrepreneurial development, as well as services for families and orphans impacted by HIV and AIDS. Each center reflects the needs and culture of the communities it serves.

Later today, both Detroit locations will hold an open house from 1 to 7 p.m. Members of the community are invited to drop by and explore the available services and activities. In addition, the newest center's City Accelerator program will select two winners to each receive \$25,000 in grants to advance their business model designs and financial strategies.

Ford Motor Company was founded in Detroit in 1903, and has been investing in the city and surrounding area ever since. Together, Ford and Ford Fund have invested more than \$166 million in southeast Michigan over the past 10 years to support programs such as the Tiny Homes neighborhood project, a fleet of 20 Ford Mobile Food Pantries to help feed the hungry, Ford Blue Oval Scholarships and sponsorship of Ford Fireworks, America's Thanksgiving Parade and the Detroit Symphony Orchestra Asia tour. Since 2005, Ford Volunteer Corps has participated in nearly 10,000 local community service projects to make people's lives better.

### **Nonprofit service providers at Ford Resource and Engagement Center:**

Detroit Public Schools Foundation (lead partner)  
Accounting Aid Society  
Arts & Scraps  
Bing Youth Institute  
Eastside Free Legal Clinic  
Girl Scouts of Southeastern Michigan  
Gleaners Community Food Bank of Southeast Michigan  
Henry Ford Learning Institute  
Invest Detroit Group Ventures  
Journi STEAM Lab  
LifeBUILDERS  
Lomas Brown Junior Foundation  
St. John Hospital & Medical Center-St. John Providence  
SER Metro-Detroit, Jobs for Progress  
Southwest Solutions  
The Jerome Bettis Bus Stops Here Foundation  
University of Michigan Center for Entrepreneurship

## About Ford Motor Company Fund

Ford Motor Company Fund is the philanthropic arm of Ford Motor Company. Established in 1949, Ford Fund invests in transformational programs that advance innovation, empower people, promote social mobility and improve community prosperity. Ford Fund works with local and global partners to create opportunities in education, encourage safe driving, enlist employee volunteers and enrich community life. Ford Fund's signature programs include Ford Blue Oval Scholars, Ford College Community Challenge, Ford Driving Dreams, Ford Driving Skills for Life, Ford Next Generation Learning and the Ford Volunteer Corps. For more information, visit <http://community.ford.com>, or join us on Facebook [@FordFund](#) and Twitter [@FordFund](#).