



**Press Release:**  
For Immediate Use  
Thursday, July 17, 2019

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## Two Nashville Agencies Receive Combined \$1,000,000 from Kresge Foundation

*Martha O'Bryan Center and Metro Action Commission Recognized for Work Lifting Families Out of Poverty*

**Nashville, TN** – The Kresge Foundation has selected Martha O'Bryan Center and Metro Action Commission for its national Next Generation Initiative. The two Nashville agencies will join eight other nonprofit and government human service agencies from across the country in this two-year learning program. The group of 5 nonprofits and 5 government agencies was selected among 500 invited applicants for their work advancing the social and economic mobility of children and families with low incomes. Each agency will receive \$500,000 to advance person-centered, outcomes-based, data driven work that advances racial equity using two-generation, whole family approaches.

“Congratulations to Dr. Cynthia Croom, Marsha Edwards and their teams on earning these grants, and thank you to the Kresge Foundation for recognizing some of the great ideas and expertise here in Nashville,” Mayor David Briley said. “Creating greater equity so that more residents can work their way out of poverty is my top priority as mayor. This \$1 million investment by Kresge will go a long way toward helping more Nashvillians succeed,” said Nashville Mayor David Briley.

The cohort of agencies has one thing in common –they are learning organizations that adapt their programs to achieve greater outcomes for families. Metropolitan Action Commission’s Executive Director, Dr. Cynthia Croom, explained, “We are not a social services agency –we are a Community Action Agency focused on defeating poverty serving over 20,000 residents in Davidson County. It is a great accomplishment that two Nashville organizations were selected given the competitive national process.”

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“Our mission is to defeat poverty in one generation,” said Martha O’Bryan Center CEO Marsha Edwards. “Kresge’s Next Gen Initiative allows us to dialogue with other agencies who also go beyond traditional human service delivery models to create permanent pathways out of poverty. We are so grateful to be part of this community of learning.” Martha O’Bryan Center serves over 12,000 people annually in its community centers and schools.

Both agencies provide connected programs for educational support (from toddlers to adults), employment coaching, and family stability services (such as food security and eviction prevention).

“Over the next two years, this dynamic group of leaders will have the opportunity to learn from each other and national experts around the country and develop a network that collectively works to transform the sector and transform lives,” Joelle Jude-Fontaine, Kresge Human Services senior program officer said. For more information about Next Generation Initiative, visit [Kresge.org](http://Kresge.org).

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### **About The Kresge Foundation:**

The Kresge Foundation was founded in 1924 to promote human progress. Today, Kresge fulfills that mission by building and strengthening pathways to opportunity for low-income people in America’s cities, seeking to dismantle structural and systemic barriers to equality and justice. Using a full array of grant, loan, and other investment tools, Kresge invests more than \$160 million annually to foster economic and social change. For more information visit [kresge.org](http://kresge.org).

### **ABOUT THE METROPOLITAN ACTION COMMISSION:**

The Metropolitan Action Commission was created by ordinance and has been the designated Community Action Agency for Nashville and Davidson County since 1964 to help families with low incomes by eliminating the barriers for families living in poverty. The Metropolitan Action Commission serves 20,000 residents annually. The agency administers the Head Start and Early Head Start program, which is the largest provider of early childhood education for children birth to five. The agency also provides assistance that help residents pay prescription costs and utility, rent and mortgage payments, and rental and utility deposits for homeless residents returning to housing. The food and nutrition provides meals to Head Start, Early Head Start and school age children. The agency’s summer youth camp program is an 8 week program for siblings of Head Start and Early Head Start children. The agency’s Workforce Initiative MAC4Jobs program provides credentialing program for Head Start/Early Head Start parents, which is nationally recognized by the National Community Action Partnership as a demonstration of impacting poverty from a Whole Family and Two Generation perspective.

### **ABOUT MARTHA O’BRYAN CENTER:**

Martha O’Bryan Center is an anti-poverty non-profit organization with longstanding history and deep community roots, grounded in tradition and strengthened by innovation. Founded in 1894 when Miss O’Bryan organized the Gleaners Society at First Presbyterian Church to support impoverished North Nashville residents, Martha O’Bryan Center has operated from the heart of Cayce Place - Nashville’s most distressed community - since 1948. This is where we continue in service, partnering with Cayce Place families to open doors of hope and possibility, create a culture of attainment, and positively shape future generations. Martha O’Bryan Center serves 12,000 people annually with its programs in early learning, parent empowerment, youth development, adult education, food security, crisis counseling and public charter schools East End Prep and Explore! Community School.