



Date: Sept. 3, 2019

Subject: Announcement of Every Child Promise Scholarship Fund

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The Community Foundation of the Ozarks will host an announcement and reception to honor the work of former News-Leader Executive Editor David Stoeffler in bringing to light the impact of poverty on the community's children during his tenure in Springfield.

The event will take place at 9 a.m., Friday, Sept. 6, at the CFO, 425 E. Trafficway. Stoeffler will be honored with an endowed fund established in his name to provide scholarships to help more kids and families gain access to quality pre-school education.

This scholarship fund is an outgrowth of Every Child Promise, a community group founded in 2014 to empower families so that every child, birth to age six, will be ready to learn upon starting school. The community leaders came together to create the Every Child Promise on the heels of a series of stories published in the News-Leader under Stoeffler's guidance bringing to light the increase in poverty and related issues after the Great Recession.

The endowed fund is made possible through gifts from a group of donors in appreciation for Stoeffler's work and the sales of a book written specifically for the Every Child Promise by its founding Co-Chair Todd Parnell, former Drury University president. Parnell wrote "Privilege and Privation, a Love Story" and donated 100 percent of the proceeds toward this fund. His wife and ECP founding Co-Chair, Betty Parnell, illustrated the cover of the book.

"The media takes a lot of hits these days, but the importance of the role it plays in shining a light on the darker corners of our society cannot be underestimated," CFO President Brian Fogle said. "Without that sometimes harsh light, citizens cannot stand up to say 'enough' when we no longer want to accept conditions as they are in our community.

"If not for the comprehensive, and often uncomfortable, reporting and photography produced by David and his team, we wouldn't be in a place today where more kids are entering school ready to learn thanks to both the private and philanthropic work and the voters who passed the Springfield Public Schools' bond issue that opens up more preschool seats for Springfield kids."

Stoeffler was Executive Editor of the News-Leader from 2010-2014. Today, he is the Executive Director of the La Crosse Public Education Foundation in his native Wisconsin.

The Community Foundation of the Ozarks is a regional public charitable foundation established in 1973 that provides asset and resource development, grantmaking and public leadership through a network of donors, 49 affiliate foundations and some 600 nonprofit partners across central and southern Missouri.

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