

**For Immediate Release**

January 23, 2019

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**Residents weigh in on how to make Macon stronger, identify the issues they care about most**

*Community Foundation of Central Georgia Revealed Insights from On the Table Macon 2018 Participants*

**MACON, GA — January 23, 2019** – Today, the Community Foundation of Central Georgia (CFCG) released a report prepared by Hart Research Associates and Public Opinion Strategies detailing key findings from a survey of participants in the first *On the Table Macon 2018* conversations. The report provides an overview of participants who completed the post-conversation survey, the key issues they discussed and how they plan to take action moving forward.

CFCG was one of 10 community foundations across the U.S. participating in *On the Table*, a national initiative funded by [the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation](#). Throughout the Macon-Bibb County region, nearly 5,000 people participated in over 600 *On the Table* conversations in offices, parks, churches, schools, restaurants and homes; over breakfast, lunch, snacks and dinner. Organizations and individuals of all ages, from all walks of life and socioeconomic backgrounds shared perspectives on the issues and opportunities facing our region and made connections to support future collaborative action. All registered *On the Table* participants were invited to complete the online survey, with 782 adult and 82 youth participants responding.

Two-thirds of adult *On the Table Macon* survey respondents are hopeful about what the future holds for their community, and 77 percent of youth respondents feel that their community is changing for the better. Furthermore, 85 percent of adults and 93 percent of youth respondents believe they can have an impact in making their community a better place to live.

When presented with a list of 15 issues, adult respondent identify the following as the top five issues they feel are most important the community to address:

- Crime, violence, & public safety (55% select as one of top three most pressing issues),
- Poverty & economic security (53%),
- Good jobs and economic development (36%),
- Local public and charter schools (30%), and
- Race relations, racism and discrimination (27%).

Forty-eight percent of adult respondents identify workforce training and financial education for unemployed and low-income citizens as one of the best ways to improve the Macon-Bibb Community.

Youth respondents were provided a different list of 13 issues facing youth, and the top five issues that they would most like the community to address are:

- Gangs and violence (63%),
- Drug use and addiction (45%),
- Bullying (44%),
- Hungry families (22%), and
- After school activities (21%).

“The insights gained from these conversations show that these residents of Macon-Bibb County are hungry to be involved,” said Kathryn H. Dennis, President, Community Foundation of Central Georgia. “*On the Table* survey respondents reveal that, while we may have issues and concerns, there is optimism that we can make a difference by volunteering and getting involved.”

Other highlights from the survey include:

- *On the Table* increases understanding – 59 percent of adult respondents learned about important issues facing their communities. Sixty-five percent feel the conversation helped them better understand how they can take action to help address issues and challenges in their community.

- *On the Table* creates new connections – 65 percent of adult respondents spoke with one or more attendees they did not already know – 39 percent of respondents went a step further and exchanged contact information with at least one person that they did not already know.
- *On the Table* inspires action – 91 percent of adult respondents are likely to take action regarding a new idea, concern or issue discussed in their conversation.

“*On the Table* aims to bring Macon residents of all backgrounds together to strengthen opportunities in our city and explore solutions to common challenges. We are seeing the impact that these conversations are creating for greater connection, collaboration and positive change,” said Lynn Murphey, Knight Foundation program director for Macon.

To encourage *On the Table* participants to implement ideas generated from their conversations, CFCG created the *Conversation to Action Mini-Grant Program* to support actionable solutions to benefit the Macon-Bibb community. The Foundation received more than 40 ideas from the day’s participants and, last month, awarded a total of \$15,000 to fund 17 project ideas inspired by *On the Table Macon* conversations. A list of grant recipients can be found at [onthetablemacon.com/grants/](http://onthetablemacon.com/grants/). Each of projects selected addresses at least one of the top three issues facing the Macon-Bibb community as identified by adult survey participants.

To download the complete report and explore an interactive dashboard of *On the Table Macon* survey responses, visit [onthetablemacon.com](http://onthetablemacon.com).

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**About On the Table Macon**

Community Foundation of Central Georgia is one of 10 community foundations across the U.S. participating in *On the Table*, a national initiative funded by the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation following a successful pilot in 2017. *On the Table* replicates an annual civic engagement initiative of the same name developed by The Chicago Community Trust in 2014. Support for *On the Table* advances Knight Foundation’s work to help cities attract and keep talented people, expand economic opportunity and create a culture of civic engagement. Knight Foundation believes that successful communities are equitable, inclusive and participatory. To learn more, visit [onthetablemacon.com](http://onthetablemacon.com).

**About the Community Foundation of Central Georgia**

The Community Foundation of Central Georgia was founded in 1993 by a group of citizens interested in encouraging philanthropy and strengthening communities. Since then, the foundation has awarded more than \$86 million in grants. Our donors make possible the foundation’s mission to enhance the quality of life for the people of Central Georgia. To learn more, visit [cfcga.org](http://cfcga.org).



**About the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation**

Knight Foundation is a national foundation with strong local roots. We invest in journalism, in the arts, and in the success of cities where brothers John S. and James L. Knight once published newspapers. Our goal is to foster informed and engaged communities, which we believe are essential for a healthy democracy.



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