

COMMUNITY FOUNDATION JOINS NATIONAL EFFORT TO TAP EXPERIENCE OF BOOMERS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE -

Community Foundation Awarded Community Experience Partnership Grant

(October 16, 2006) – On the Lower Eastern Shore, and nationwide, the baby boom generation is reaching age 60. It's the largest, healthiest, and best educated group in history to move through and beyond their sixth decade and national research shows that tens of millions of people over 60 are looking to make a difference in their community.

The Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore has been awarded a \$25,000 grant to study how we can take full advantage of this interest locally – identifying opportunities for older adults to help provide creative solutions to community problems for engaging residents over 60 in work that benefits the Lower Eastern Shore.

The grant was announced by The Atlantic Philanthropies, a private foundation that supports programs worldwide. It's part of the first phase of The Atlantic Philanthropies' Community Experience Partnership, in which 30 U.S. community foundations have been selected to receive grants totaling \$750,000 to assess and better understand the opportunities for older adults to become engaged in devising creative solutions for problems in their communities.

This initial local investment will be followed up by subsequent grants nationwide that will provide millions of dollars of support for the planning and implementation of new programs that facilitate greater civic engagement among the over 60 population.

“Tapping the tremendous potential of older adults to improve life for everyone in their communities is at the heart of this initiative,” said Laura Robbins, Head of the U.S. Aging Program for The Atlantic Philanthropies. “In communities across the U.S., the energy, skills and experience of people over sixty are ready to be unleashed. Imagine how much stronger communities will be when they choose to benefit from the time and talents of their most experienced citizens.”

The Lower Eastern Shore, however, may lack the supports and structures needed to mobilize and place people over 60 in positions that address serious social issues. Attitudes and perceptions may stand in the way too.

“One of the greatest strengths of the Lower Eastern Shore has always been the experience of our people,” said Spicer Bell, Community Foundation president. “This grant will allow us to take a closer look at how we might overcome outdated attitudes and capitalize on the skills and passions of baby boomers as they transition from career to retirement.”

With the first of 77 million baby boomers turning 60 this year, the United States is facing a massive demographic shift. Research from Civic Ventures, a think tank dedicated to helping society achieve the greatest return on experience, indicates that nearly 45 million boomers want to be involved in work—paid or volunteer—that helps others. Far from frail, most of today's 60+ boomers are fit, focused and looking forward to new challenges.

According to Civic Ventures, today's 60-something citizens are “pioneers in a new stage spanning the decades between middle and late life... neither young nor old, they represent an extraordinary pool of social and human capital.”

Through its part in the Community Experience Partnership, The Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore will help tap this extraordinary pool of experience locally. The Community Foundation will study ways to increase the involvement of people over 60 in civic improvement through volunteering, employment and lifelong learning opportunities.

Selected from a national pool of applicants, the Community Foundation will help lead the charge in deploying the wealth of boomer experience for the good of their communities, according to Erica Joseph, Program Officer at the Community Foundation.

Joseph noted, “The Community Foundation is an expert in analyzing community problems, assessing solutions, and leveraging financial resources. This initiative gives us the opportunity to maximize the value of a growing supply of human resources available to our community.”

The Community Experience Partnership is managed by Community Planning & Research LLC with fiduciary support from the Community Initiative Funds at the San Francisco Foundation. The Atlantic Philanthropies is dedicated to bringing about lasting changes in the lives of disadvantaged and vulnerable people. Atlantic focuses on critical social problems related to aging, disadvantaged children and youth, population health, and reconciliation and human rights.

Programs funded by Atlantic operate in Australia, Bermuda, Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland, South Africa, the United States and Viet Nam. To learn more, please visit www.atlanticphilanthropies.org.

The purpose of The Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore is to empower donors to make a profound difference in the quality of human and community life in Maryland’s Lower Eastern Shore, today and tomorrow. The Foundation believes in the power of philanthropy to change the lives of people and communities.

The Community Foundation has been an effective steward of the community’s charitable resources since 1984, inspiring philanthropy in the Maryland counties of Somerset, Wicomico and Worcester. For more information about the Community Foundation visit the Foundation’s web site at www.cfes.org, or phone 410-742-9911.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
Dr. Spicer Bell or Mrs. Erica Joseph: 410-742-9911**