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**COMMUNITY FOUNDATION OF THE CHATTAHOOCHEE VALLEY
INVITES AREA RESIDENTS TO
PUT THE FUTURE OF OUR COMMUNITY *ON THE TABLE* NOVEMBER 7**

*Building and maintaining strong, safe and dynamic communities
is on the menu for thousands over mealtime conversations*

COLUMBUS, GA. – August 15, 2017 -- In communities across the Chattahoochee Valley, thousands of Columbus-area residents will come together in small groups on November 7 for *On the Table*. Residents will break bread and discuss not only what’s great about our community, but also ways to make it even better — more sustainable, safe, strong and vibrant.

Columbus is one of 10 cities across the U.S. selected to replicate the *On the Table* initiative this year with funding from the [John S. and James L. Knight Foundation](#). The Community Foundation of the Chattahoochee Valley is leading this effort in the Columbus-area. Additional support for the local project is being provided from the Community Foundation’s Community Endowment Fund and Chattahoochee Valley Fair Fund.

“*On the Table* will bring Columbus-area residents together to discuss the city’s many opportunities and address challenges, in a connected, organic way,” said Lilly Weinberg, Knight Foundation director for community foundations. “Its focus on local problem-solving and national knowledge-building will help establish a bigger network of engaged citizens across the country.”

On the Table is designed to elevate civic conversation, foster new relationships and inspire collaborative action. The goal is for thousands of area residents of all ages, from all walks of life and socioeconomic circumstances, to participate in substantive mealtime conversations on November 7 – with even more connected to the conversations through social media using the #ChattChat hashtag.

CFCV invites area residents to host small-group tables in their homes, workplaces or community spaces. Hosts can then invite people to join them for a constructive meal to discuss how to work together to better our community. Hosts are in charge of their own event: whom they invite (people they know or haven’t yet met), what they serve, and what time of day it’s held. Hosts and guests can register at onthetablechatt.com.

Hosts will be provided with toolkits that include sample discussion questions. But the topics, issues and ideas discussed during each of the *On the Table* conversations will be completely organic and driven by the interests and perspectives of the participants and the opportunities and challenges in their community that are most important to them.

The Community Foundation was founded in 1998 to help people with philanthropic interests easily and effectively support the issues they care about. Since then, the Community Foundation has grown to nearly \$150 million in assets and has awarded over \$140 million in grants through its donor advised, unrestricted, designated, field-of-interest, scholarship, and organization endowment funds. As a local center for philanthropy, the Community Foundation of the Chattahoochee Valley works with individuals, families, corporations, private foundations and not-for-profit organizations to carry out their charitable objectives and address emerging community issues.

on the table

your voice matters.

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“Although we at the Community Foundation are thrilled to bring this initiative to our communities, *On the Table* genuinely belongs to the people who participate,” said Betsy Covington, president and CEO of the Community Foundation. “In a very real sense, it’s not *our* project; it’s *yours*! Each table conversation throughout the day will be unique. It’s our hope they’ll help people learn a little more about each other – and become more closely tied to their community.”

At the conclusion of the events on November 7, the participants will receive a brief email survey, compiled by the University of Illinois at Chicago’s Institute for Policy and Civic Engagement. The survey will ask about people’s experience with the project, the topics their group discussed and the extent to which this experience may impact their future level of civic engagement. CFCV will publicly share these outcomes, including trends, common themes and new collaborations developed to advance some of the ideas and solutions generated. The idea is to allow Chattahoochee Valley residents the opportunity to view the results, learn more about issues affecting the community, and become more engaged and active.

On the Table was introduced in Chicago in 2014 by The Chicago Community Trust. Since then, *On the Table* has fostered civic engagement and generated hundreds of action ideas from hundreds of thousands of Chicago-area residents.

Support for *On the Table* is one part of [Knight Foundation](#)’s efforts to help cities attract and nurture talented people, expand economic opportunity and create a culture of civic engagement. Knight Foundation believes that successful communities are equitable, inclusive and participatory.

For more information or to sign up to participate as a host or a guest, Columbus-area residents can visit onthetablechatt.com or call 706-718-9565.

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