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J. MARION SIMS FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES HEALTHY COMMUNITIES STRATEGIC ALLIANCE

The J. Marion Sims Foundation today announced a strategic partnership with the Chester Healthcare Foundation, the Cabarrus Health Alliance, the University of South Carolina Lancaster and LearnTV.

The partnership is part of the J. Marion Sims Foundation's continuing commitment to health and wellness.

The partnership is designed to accomplish four goals:

- develop a deeper understanding of the community's indicators of health,
- create networks among community members for deeper investigation of healthy living gaps,
- pilot a new education pathway in health promotion, and
- create learning opportunities between Carolinas communities to improve health outcomes for all citizens.

In April 2016, the Foundation launched a broad look at the community's health and invited representatives from the Spartanburg Indicators Project to share their successes using data and public-private partnerships to promote community wellness.

"During those spring meetings, we sensed our own community's readiness for this collaborative work," J. Marion Sims Foundation President & CEO Susan DeVenny said. "We're now asking for input about what makes our community great and what could make it stronger along a profile of indicators. Through surveys and focus groups since July, we have heard from 1300 individuals across Lancaster and Chester Counties. We're proud to expand our collaboration to partners in North Carolina."

Chester Healthcare Foundation President & CEO Bill Bundy agreed. "We are joining forces to uncover data about the health of our community and to learn together about how to make improvements that will make a lasting difference."

The Cabarrus Health Alliance is in the former textile mill town of Kannapolis, NC, and was recently deemed a Model Public Health Agency by the N.C. Institute for Public Health. The alliance's mission is to achieve the highest level of individual and community health through community groups and agencies working together, and the alliance has begun innovative health programs and policies in Cabarrus County that can be copied in other communities.

"This strategic partnership with the communities of Lancaster and Chester counties is another example of our commitment to cross-jurisdictional sharing of best practices in health promotion," Cabarrus Health Alliance Chief Operating Officer Erin Shoe said. "Through this collaborative effort, we intend to work with community partners to pilot health improvement strategies in Lancaster and Chester Counties."

The partnership also expands health education options and outreach on the campus of USC Lancaster.

"This partnership will create new classroom, practicum, and internship opportunities for our students in 2017," University of South Carolina Lancaster Dean Walt Collins said "Adding a pre-professional track in health promotion will help our students and our community understand ways to improve health policies and everyday healthy behaviors. We know our young adults are part of the solution."

Lancaster County School District's LearnTV – broadcast through Comporium Cable – is another vital part of the new health promotion alliance.

"We hope to use LearnTV to reach thousands of families with important health information right in the comfort of their homes," LearnTV instructor David Knight said. "We look forward to working with partners committed to lifelong learning

and dedicated to making our communities and families healthy.”

“Our community is helping shape the future we all desire,” said DeVenny. “We look forward to adding additional partners to this strategic alliance focused on healthy outcomes for all our citizens.”

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The J. Marion Sims Foundation is celebrating its 20th year of grantmaking intended to support and transform the health and wellness of Lancaster, Fort Lawn, and Great Falls, SC. For information about this initiative, our grants and other programs, please see www.jmsims.org or contact the Foundation at (803) 286-8772. To participate in our survey about making the health of our community stronger, please go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RJC6FDJ>