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PHILLIPS FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES UPCOMING LAUNCH OF THE GUILFORD COUNTY HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS INITIATIVE

GREENSBORO, N.C. (Nov. 28, 2016) – Phillips Foundation today announced its latest original program, the Guilford County Healthy Relationships Initiative (HRI). The HRI is a first-of-its-kind, community-wide effort developed by the Foundation in partnership with the UNCG Department of Counseling and Educational Development to improve relational health across Guilford County. The initiative will officially launch in February 2017 at the conclusion of its research and development phase.

U.S. Census and National Historic Geographical Information data indicate significant growth in relationship distress among Guilford County residents. In 2013 and 2014, Guilford County led the state in domestic violence homicides, and in 2015, the Guilford County Family Justice Center assisted nearly 5,000 primary and secondary victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, child maltreatment, and elder abuse. Furthermore, recent Guilford County marriage license and divorce records show that for every two marriage licenses filed, approximately one divorce is filed.

“Unhealthy relationships, particularly within the family context, threaten the stability of our society’s foundation,” said Elizabeth Phillips, executive director of Phillips Foundation. “With the integration of the HRI’s programming and ‘upstream’ interventions into the service platforms of our partner organizations, we plan to democratize best practices and resources from the clinic environment to the broader culture. Phillips Foundation is excited to set this vision in motion and to enhance a positive community culture across Guilford County that values relationship, ultimately preventing trauma and dysfunction in the home.”

Phillips Foundation brought the concept of the Healthy Relationships Initiative to the UNCG Department of Counseling and Educational Development, which has since implemented research and development of the original program involving special emphasis on reaching distressed or vulnerable populations served by existing Phillips Foundation grantee organizations. Other original programs created by Phillips Foundation include the Impact Investing Think Tank, a program launched in spring 2016 that seeks to activate a variety of stakeholders around investing for financial returns alongside positive social and/or environmental objectives.

“Phillips Foundation has made great strides in improving the well-being of Guilford County residents, and we are grateful for their support and partnership on this important preventative investment,” said Dr. Christine E. Murray, associate professor at UNCG Department of Counseling and Educational Development. “Launching the HRI will allow us to utilize and disperse effective tools and skills to ensure that families are safe and supportive places for children to develop into successful, contributing members of society.”

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-Page 2-

A diverse and active HRI Steering Committee met over the last eight months to inform the planning of this initiative. The committee includes representatives from Phillips Foundation grantee organizations, governmental entities, and many other non-profits, including: Partners Ending Homelessness, YMCA of Greensboro, Teach For America, Greensboro Children's Museum, United Way of Greater Greensboro, United Way of High Point, Youth Villages, Say Yes To Education, The Salvation Army Boys & Girls Club, Guilford County Family Justice Center, Ready for School/Ready for Life, Guilford County Department of Social Services, Guilford Green Foundation, Family Service of the Piedmont, Children's Home Society of North Carolina, Guilford Education Alliance, Greensboro Public Library, Greensboro Parks & Recreation, Center for New North Carolinians, Guilford Child Development, and YWCA of Greensboro.

The HRI Steering Committee and UNCG researchers have developed a multi-year, strategic plan for the HRI to address local community needs via three main components: community mobilization, educational programming, and social marketing. Complete information about the HRI will be unveiled in February 2017 at an official launch event. To stay informed about the HRI, please follow its Facebook page at www.facebook.com/guilfordHRI.

About Phillips Foundation

Founded in 2002 and fully funded in 2014, the Phillips Foundation represents the philanthropic legacy of its founder, Kermit G. Phillips II, a successful real estate entrepreneur from Greensboro, N.C. The current Board of Trustees leverages the Phillips Foundation as a catalytic capital platform through which they support positive change through impact investing, strategic grants, and original programs. For more information, visit PhillipsFoundationNC.org. *Phillips Foundation currently does not accept unsolicited grant applications.*

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