

Press Release

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McGREGOR FUND ANNOUNCES NEW STAFF

Detroit, MI – The McGregor Fund is pleased to announce the appointment of two new staff members. Vanessa Samuelson has joined the Fund as Director of Learning and Reporting. On February 22, Heidi Alcock will join as Director of Grant Development and Communications. These two newly created positions replace the Program Director position previously held by Kate Levin Markel, who was named President in 2015.

“The way in which foundations define and staff our work has not kept pace with how our grantees must operate,” says Ms. Markel. “In order to be better partners, we have to build our capacity to work with data being generated at the grantee level as well as across networks of nonprofits and across our community. We’ve also needed to become more nimble in the way we communicate about our work and that of our grantees. These two new staff positions represent our effort, as a small office, to build these key capacities and better integrate them with our grantmaking.”

As Director of Learning and Reporting, Ms. Samuelson will support grantees through the grant reporting process and deepen the Fund’s learning from their work. She will also be a resource for grantees as they strive to improve how they measure both day-

to-day performance and organizational outcomes. Vanessa will also represent the Fund in collaborative projects that are designed to create, analyze, utilize or disseminate large data sets, or develop a more data-oriented culture in the local nonprofit sector.

Ms. Samuelson is relocating to Detroit from Providence, RI, where she worked with community initiatives and nonprofit organizations seeking to use information to strengthen their work in vulnerable communities. Her prior positions include: Information Coordinator for the Annie E. Casey Foundation's Making Connections Initiative in Providence; Director of Outcomes at Meeting Street, a large education and social services organization; and Data Governance Lead for the Rhode Island Department of Education's federally-funded Race to the Top – Early Learning Initiative. A native of Chicago, Vanessa earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan and a master's degree in Community and Regional Planning from the University of Oregon.

As Director of Grant Development and Communications, Ms. Alcock will be the primary point of contact for grantseekers and others bringing ideas to the Fund. She will be chiefly responsible for guiding the foundation's grants portfolio to align with grantmaking objectives. In addition, she will serve as the Fund's communications officer and assure that its mission and the particulars of its grantmaking program are clearly understood by grantseekers and other stakeholders.

Ms. Alcock brings to McGregor nearly twenty years of nonprofit and public sector experience. Her prior positions include: City Planner at the Detroit City Planning Commission; CEO of Michigan Community Resources (formerly Community Legal Resources); and Director of Operations for the launch of the Detroit Future City Implementation Office. In all of these roles, Heidi has worked with community-based organizations across Southeast Michigan to enhance nonprofit participation in public policy and improve their access to diverse operational resources. She earned a bachelor's degree from Wayne State University, followed by a master's degree in public administration with concentrations in public and urban policy.

“In order to fully realize these new positions, we needed to find two exceptionally talented individuals with multiple skill sets and perspectives, who are also excited to help the Fund develop this new way of working,” says Ms. Markel. “We could not be more thrilled that Vanessa and Heidi have chosen to join us.”

The McGregor Fund is a private foundation established in 1925 by gifts from Katherine and Tracy McGregor “to relieve the misfortunes and promote the well-being of mankind.” The foundation awards grants to organizations working in human services, education, health care, arts and culture, and public benefit. The area of principal interest to the foundation is the City of Detroit and Macomb, Oakland and Wayne counties. The McGregor Fund has granted over \$235 million since its founding and had assets of \$175 million as of June 30, 2015. Visit www.mcgregorfund.org for additional information.