



WOODY AND GAYLE HUNT FAMILY FOUNDATION

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**WOODY AND GAYLE HUNT FAMILY FOUNDATION INVESTS \$500K TO BRING
NATIONALLY-RECOGNIZED POVERTY REDUCTION MODEL TO EL PASO**

Five-year matching grant will support Family Independence Initiative in their work with El Paso families struggling with poverty

El Paso, TX -- Today, the Woody and Gayle Hunt Family Foundation announced a half a million dollar investment over the next five years in a new initiative to help families in El Paso County that struggle with poverty achieve economic prosperity. In the short-term, the initiative will help families who are struggling with the COVID-related economic downturn access one-time cash payment of \$500 through the El Paso County COVID-19 Emergency Relief Assistance Fund.

The foundation will work with the Family Independence Initiative (FII) to establish the El Paso County COVID-19 Emergency Relief Assistance Fund, which will invest in families across El Paso County and the solutions they bring to fight poverty. FII has established similar funds across the nation, and brings a successful poverty reduction model that combines community support systems and direct investment in people living with low incomes so they can work collectively to achieve prosperity. The foundation has committed to a \$100,000 challenge grant for each of the next five years (for a total of \$500,000), up to \$100,000 made in the first year.

“Families in El Paso are resourceful, innovative, and bring so many assets to the fight against poverty, but have lacked the support and investments needed to turn their financial goals into reality,” said Woody L. Hunt, Chairman of the Woody and Gayle Hunt Family Foundation. “This partnership will allow us to connect families in our region with a proven model that works, and will allow us to rethink our approach to poverty moving forward.”

Families receiving money from the fund will also obtain access to UpTogether, FII’s social capital platform. UpTogether allows people experiencing poverty to build and strengthen their social networks so they can support each other in accomplishing their goals.

Since launching in 2001, FII has worked with over 4,000 households in several cities across the United States. Over the two-year periods that FII tracks their progress, these households have seen average increases in their monthly incomes of 23 percent and in their personal savings of 400 percent.

“FII’s model of trusting and investing in families has lifted thousands out of poverty and given them the tools that they need to continue to build wealth and grow their income. This initiative aligns with our family’s commitment to improve the quality of life for those who call El Paso home by ensuring we address the challenges that keep them from prospering,” said Josh Hunt, President of the Woody and Gayle Hunt Family Foundation.

Through the foundation's support, FII will partner with EPISO/Border Interfaith to ensure that harder-to-reach families in the region are aware of the new financial resources that are available to them and that they are able to access them.

“There is no one who can stretch a dollar further than a single parent trying to make ends meet,” said Father Pablo Matta of EPISO/Border Interfaith. “Now more than ever, we must invest in our people, and ensure that they don’t only have the resources to weather the current pandemic, but that we walk with them on their journey out of poverty in the long-term. With this partnership we intend to do just that.”

For more information about this new initiative, visit <https://www.epcounty.com/>.

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About the Woody and Gayle Hunt Family Foundation:

The Woody and Gayle Hunt Family Foundation is one of the Borderplex region’s preeminent private family foundations focused on creating a globally competitive region. Since 1987, it has made grants and commitments of more than \$111 million in individuals and institutions working to transform education, improve healthcare, advance regional economic and cultural development, and create a greater quality of life for all Borderplex residents.