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**Central Carolina Community Foundation Releases First Findings
From 2026 Midlands Community Assessment**

New Data Available from 3,500+ Residents and Nonprofit Leaders Across 11 Counties

Columbia, S.C. - September 9, 2026 - Central Carolina Community Foundation has released the first findings from its 2026 Community Assessment, a comprehensive regional effort designed to build a deeper, data-informed understanding of the strengths, challenges, and opportunities shaping communities across the Midlands.

The Foundation surveyed 3,377 residents and 168 nonprofit leaders, generating a substantial new body of data about residents' experiences and the realities facing organizations that serve them. The findings are now available through an interactive dashboard featuring results from both surveys, including county-level resident data that can be filtered by demographics.

"We heard from thousands of people across the Midlands through a rigorous process designed to capture both regional patterns and the distinct experiences of communities across all 11 counties. We know the Foundation is not the only one with a role to play in what comes next, and we want what people shared with us to be useful far beyond our own walls," said Dr. Chelsea Richard, Vice President of Strategy & Operations at Central Carolina Community Foundation, who led the assessment process. "The dashboard puts that information directly into people's hands so they can ask their own questions and use it to inform conversations and decisions about what comes next."

The results highlight both community strengths and opportunities. Across Midlands residents, nearly two-thirds said they would feel welcome and comfortable using public spaces, and 63% said they can get to the places they need to go. At the same time, less than half said they can easily find information about what is happening in their community, and among parents and caregivers, less than half said their children have reliable access to child care, afterschool, or summer programs.

Nonprofit leaders reported significant pressure on their organizations. Nearly 81% said demand for their services had increased over the previous year, while only 33% said they have the staffing needed to meet current community needs, and 16% said they have the financial capacity needed.

The dashboard is the first release of findings from Central Carolina Community Foundation's Community Assessment. The Foundation will share additional analysis and insights over time. The findings will help inform the Foundation's future grantmaking, community leadership, donor engagement, and partnerships, while also serving as a resource for public and private partners to direct support where nonprofit organizations across the Midlands need it most.

Explore the Community Assessment Dashboard on the Foundation's new website at yourfoundation.org/for-the-community/data-insights/.

About Central Carolina Community Foundation

Central Carolina Community Foundation connects and mobilizes people and resources to strengthen our community. The Foundation partners with donors to turn their passions into meaningful impact through charitable funds, strategic giving, and support for nonprofit organizations across the Midlands and beyond. Through grants, partnerships, and community leadership, the Foundation advances solutions that address the region's most pressing challenges. Founded in 1984, Central Carolina Community Foundation has awarded more than \$335 million in grants and is home to more than 500 charitable funds totaling over \$290 million.