



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Homeless Children's Education Fund Awarded \$400,000 to Expand Student Programming

Pittsburgh, Pa – The Homeless Children’s Education Fund (HCEF) is proud to announce two transformative grants totaling \$400,000, including \$250,000 from the Richard King Mellon Foundation and \$150,000 from the Eden Hall Foundation.

This investment fuels HCEF’s Continuum of Programming Model, a longitudinal approach that ensures students from early learning through workforce readiness don’t just survive homelessness, they rise beyond it.

“This support is not charity, it is strategic investment,” said AJ Jefferson, president and CEO. “Together, these foundations are backing a model that is proven to move students from crisis to confidence. With this investment, we are not just meeting needs, we are building pathways. Pathways that ensure every student has the support, the opportunity and the belief they need to rise beyond homelessness and step fully into their future.”

These funds come at a pivotal time as rising costs of living continue to place significant strain on the region’s most vulnerable students and families. Many are facing urgent needs, including food insecurity, clothing gaps and housing instability, that threaten both day-to-day stability and long-term educational outcomes.

Support from these foundations enables HCEF to respond to these immediate challenges while preserving the resources needed to reach 1,500 children by 2027. It ensures that today’s crises do not take away tomorrow’s hope.

HCEF's Continuum of Programming Model meets students where they are, providing consistent support from early childhood through post-secondary education. Families with young children join enrichment workshops that spark learning and creativity. Elementary students receive tutoring and enrichment, high schoolers build leadership and workforce skills and post-secondary students access coaching, financial aid and career guidance.

The outcomes are compelling: students participating in three or more Continuum programs achieve a 90% retention rate and at least 90% of HCEF high school seniors graduate or earn their GED. This is well above the national average for students experiencing homelessness.

For more information on HCEF, visit www.homelessfund.org.

About Homeless Children's Education Fund

The Homeless Children's Education Fund (HCEF) is dedicated to ensuring that children and youth experiencing homelessness have access to the educational opportunities, support, and stability they need to succeed. Through advocacy, funding, and partnerships, HCEF works to break barriers and empower students facing housing insecurity.

About the Richard King Mellon Foundation

About the Richard King Mellon Foundation: Founded in 1947, the Richard King Mellon Foundation is the largest foundation in Southwestern Pennsylvania, and one of the [50 largest in the world](#). The Foundation's 2025 year-end net assets were \$3.3 billion, and its Trustees in 2025 disbursed more than \$167 million in grants and program-related investments. The Foundation focuses its funding on six primary program areas, delineated in its [2021-2030 Strategic Plan](#).

About the Eden Hall Foundation

Eden Hall Foundation was founded in 1983 as the continuation of founder Sebastian Mueller's philanthropy, seeking to improve the quality of life in the region. The Foundation strengthens Southwestern Pennsylvania by supporting education, health, and community vitality, creating opportunities for people and places to thrive, especially those facing the greatest challenges.