



Acting on Opportunity **An Open Call for Partnership in** **"A Summer of Opportunity 2017"**



April 18, 2017

To the Charlotte-Mecklenburg community,

As leaders of the CMPD and the YMCA, we recognize our responsibility to match our actions with our rhetoric to help build opportunity in our community. To this end, the Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department and the YMCA have partnered to pilot "A Summer of Opportunity 2017," a program we believe will help our youth build economic mobility and access to opportunity, while also addressing other driving social issues facing all of us. We are asking for partners in the community to step forward and join us in in this collaborative process.

About "A Summer of Opportunity 2017"

During "A Summer of Opportunity 2017," we will open three YMCA locations (Simmons, Stratford-Richardson and McCrorey) to 13-18 year olds on Thursday-Saturday night from 8:00 pm – 11:30 pm, including a hot meal...all for FREE. These YMCA locations are in the heart of the "opportunity crescent" in our community and can help our youth and children who fall most deeply into Charlotte-Mecklenburg's opportunity gap.

The use of YMCA of Greater Charlotte facilities and space will be provided at no cost. We are seeking funding to cover the direct costs – staffing and supplies. The YMCA and CMPD will partner with community-based organizations and invite these organizations into the local YMCA to partner in serving our youth. The Y will package funding for up to ten agencies to assist in making these partnerships possible for community-based organization partners (see further information attached).

Our goals are to give our youth positive outlets for their time and energy during the summer months, build trust between youth and CMPD, prevent crime, promote health and reduce academic summer slide. These goals align with the recommendations of the Opportunity Task Force and highlight the need for early interventions in life to create access to opportunities and increase economic mobility. This program has successfully lifted youth in Boston and Los Angeles, and we believe it can do the same for our youth in Charlotte-Mecklenburg.

Act today and build tomorrow

The cost for one YMCA location for the summer (June 22 – August 5) is \$50,000, for a total of \$150,000 to make "A Summer of Opportunity 2017" a reality in all three YMCA locations. We are asking you to step forward with us to help fund a portion of the total of \$150,000 to activate this initiative.

Why action now matters in Charlotte-Mecklenburg

The last twelve months have presented social challenges in our city, state and nation. Many people contend our society is in the midst of possibly the most divisive time in our history. Charlotte has certainly not been immune to this discord. Last September, our community was rocked by racial tension stemming from the officer-involved shooting of a black man; this is a story that has become far too common throughout U.S. cities.

An outcome of the September unrest was a formal commitment from virtually all of Charlotte's leaders. In part, this statement read that the riots and protests "...surfaced questions of who we are, what we think, how we feel, and what we value. To those questions, we would simply say that we are a community that understands:

- *The anger and pain are real;*
- *The issues connected to the reality of racism are not new;*
- *The work requires change in systems and structures;*
- *Our work will be ongoing and long term and must include additional voices, leadership and perspectives;*
- *The change required will not be easy or comfortable;*
- *We must have the courage to listen, to respond and to act now.*

We commit ourselves to the continuous work of building and being a community of justice, equity, fairness and opportunity for all."

These words must move to actions in our community. We believe that "A Summer of Opportunity 2017" can serve as an initial step and a testament on what we can do together to unite our community toward a common cause.

We look forward to creating a summer, and a community, of opportunity for our children and youth in the days, months and years ahead of us.

Sincerely,



Chief Kerr Putney
Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department



Todd Tibbits
President & CEO, YMCA