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**Supporting Charlotte's young leaders and small businesses**  
Charles Thomas, Knight Foundation [web@knightfoundation.org]

**Sent:** Monday, September 28, 2020 1:42 PM  
**To:** [Steve Johnston](#)

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Dear Sarah,

There's been no shortage of negative news lately, but I want to highlight some good news for Charlotte. We recently announced the winners of the Emerging City Champions fellowship — two of whom are Charlotteans and have innovative ideas for our city. And in another positive development for Charlotte, Knight contributed to the Small Business Innovation Fund in order to assist more Historic West End businesses affected by the pandemic.

**Charlotte's Emerging City Champions**

Earlier this year, Knight Foundation and 80 cities announced the 20 winners of the 2020 Emerging City Champions fellowship. The open call was for young leaders with creative ideas to help build more equitable and inclusive post-pandemic communities in cities where Knight operates. We're thrilled to spotlight the winners from Charlotte — Emily and Makayla.

- [Emily Condon](#) will transform underpasses into neighborhood gateways that celebrate community identity and culture in the West End of Charlotte. The gateways will be part of a walking/biking loop route connecting West End neighborhoods and Uptown.
- [Makayla Binter](#) will work with youth and local artists on a collaborative mural showcasing the visual timeline of the Historic West End in relation to the rich history of protest, perseverance and strength of West Charlotte High School.

Learn more about Emily, Makayla and all the 2020 ECC cohort [here](#).

**Charlotte Center City Partners Small Business Innovation Fund**

In September, Knight announced \$250,000 in support to the Charlotte Center City Partners Small Business Innovation Fund. The fund — launched by Charlotte Center City Partners and Honeywell — is designed to support innovation and adaptation by small businesses as they face new economic challenges brought on by the

pandemic.

Knight's contribution aimed to specifically support small businesses of 50 or fewer employees in the Historic West End with grants of up to \$40,000. To learn more about the Small Business Innovation Fund, [click here](#).

Stay connected to our monthly newsletter to learn of upcoming events and opportunities in Charlotte. Invite your friends and colleagues to [sign up for our newsletter](#).

Stay safe,

Charles Thomas  
Knight Foundation  
Program Director for Charlotte  
[@CThomasCLT](#)



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