

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

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### **Mary Ellen's Hearth Receives Fifth 'Surprise Grant' from the Central Alabama Community Foundation**

MONTGOMERY – This year the Central Alabama Community Foundation (CACF) is celebrating 30 years since its founding in 1987, by a group of civic leaders who had a vision to provide long-term financial support for nonprofit agencies in our community. To commemorate this milestone anniversary, CACF will award 30 surprise grants to local nonprofits. These grants will be awarded over the course of 2017.

The fifth surprise grant was awarded Wednesday, March 8 to Mary Ellen's Hearth at the Nellie Burge Community Center in Montgomery. CACF staff surprised Executive Director Dr. LaTeasa Hicks during their monthly board meeting with balloons and a \$3,000 check.

Mary Ellen's Hearth opened in 2012 as a Christian, residential program for homeless women and their children. The program operates at the Nellie Burge Community Center which has been a ministry of the United Methodist Church since 1904. Mary Ellen's Hearth is named after Mary Ellen Bullard to honor her legacy within the Church and her passion for the Community Center.

Residents at Mary Ellen's Hearth learn and develop financial literacy, job, parenting and life skills to live a life of independence. Mary Ellen's Hearth has ten well-equipped independent living units to meet this immediate need for residents. The program is designed for residents to transition into permanent housing within two years.

"Mary Ellen's Hearth offers hope and empowerment to women in a desperate time of their lives. With this grant, we want to support the work of this organization and applaud the residents for improving their lives and their children's. If you would like to support local nonprofits such as this one, please join us in the celebration of our anniversary and consider making a donation," said CACF President Burton Ward.

Donations to support the 30 surprise grants and the work of the Central Alabama Community Foundation, can be made online via the Foundation's website at [www.cacfinfo.org](http://www.cacfinfo.org) or by check to CACF, 35 S. Court Street, Montgomery, AL 36104. For more information, contact CACF Development Director Whitney Griswold Califf at (334) 264-6223 or [whitney.griswold@cacfinfo.org](mailto:whitney.griswold@cacfinfo.org)

*CACF was founded in 1987 and has grown to hold over \$58 million in charitable assets while distributing over \$50 million to organizations that serve the community. CACF serves several counties including Autauga, Coffee, Dale, Elmore, Geneva, Henry, Houston, Lowndes, Macon, and Montgomery.*

*Through its 200+ funds, CACF addresses a wide variety of concerns, supporting projects and programs in education, health, human services, cultural arts, recreation, historic preservation and other civic concerns. Each year, the Foundation distributes over \$3 million through hundreds of grants and scholarships.*

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