



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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REBUILD 850 Embraces \$100,000 Challenge of Matching Grant for Hurricane Michael Disaster Relief with CFNF

TALLAHASSEE, Fla.– **REBUILD 850's** leadership team announced today that it is actively collaborating with The Community Foundation of North Florida to raise \$100,000 needed to draw down a promised \$100,000 match from the Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation for the Disaster Relief Fund at the Community Foundation to support Hurricane Michael recovery efforts. All of the funds raised, and the match, will be directed for support of priority needs in the broad swath of northwest Florida so severely impacted by Hurricane Michael.

REBUILD 850's co-chairs – former Florida House of Representatives Speakers **Allan Bense & Will Weatherford**, and former Congresswoman **Gwen Graham** – embraced the challenge of helping to raise \$100,000 to double the positive impact of the Schulze Family Foundation challenge grant. **This grant will match all donations made to the Community Foundation Hurricane Michael Disaster Relief Fund, up to \$100,000 by April 15, 2019.**

“Every dollar that flows to provide hurricane relief in Northwest Florida is going to help people in real and continuing need – so we are excited to work the Community Foundation of North Florida to maximize the impact of this generous challenge grant,” said Bense. “It’s going to take years for this region to recover and rebuild – so we need to make valuable use of every day and every dollar for that purpose.”

Weatherford and Graham offered similar enthusiasm for the challenge grant opportunity:

“We intend to actively reach out to caring individuals and corporations with a commitment to social responsibility to seek their support for contributing to this fund,” said Graham. “We know that, together with the Community Foundation team, we can hopefully raise the \$100,000 to draw down the match to help our neighbors in need,” added Weatherford.

The Community Foundation expressed gratitude for support of the Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation and the on-going support of the community.

“We are acutely aware of the devastation in our surrounding counties and the long road to recovery ahead for these areas. We are thankful to have the opportunity to leverage support for the Hurricane Michael Disaster Relief Fund and hope this match will inspire contributions for the continued relief efforts in the impacted communities.” said Joy Watkins, President and CEO of the Community Foundation.

When Hurricane Michael devastated the Florida Panhandle, the Community Foundation of North Florida activated its Disaster Relief Fund. Contributions to this fund will support the long-term recovery efforts of the affected communities in our 11-county funding area. The Community Foundation believes it can best serve as a support mechanism as efforts shift from short- and mid-term projects to long-term initiatives. As such, we welcome contributions to the CFNF Disaster Relief Fund that will support organizations addressing those needs for years to come.

To contribute to the Disaster Relief Fund, please visit www.cfnf.org/giving/Hurricane-Relief.cfm, send a check to the Community Foundation of North Florida, noting it is for the Disaster Relief Fund to support Hurricane Michael, at 3600 Maclay Boulevard, Suite 200, Tallahassee, FL 32312 or call the Community Foundation at 850-222-2899.

About the Community Foundation of North Florida

The Community Foundation of North Florida is a nonprofit organization serving the 11-County Big Bend area (Calhoun, Franklin, Gadsden, Gulf, Jackson, Jefferson, Leon, Liberty, Madison, Taylor and Wakulla) by promoting and supporting charitable giving. The Foundation helps people give to their favorite charities and helps nonprofit organizations with grants, education and endowment building expertise.

About REBUILD 850

The REBUILD 850 initiative launched in November 2018 to keep the continuing needs of the Florida Panhandle top of mind as the hard-hit communities work to recover from the devastation of Hurricane Michael. REBUILD 850 is co-chaired by former Florida House Speakers Allan Bense and Will Weatherford and former Congresswoman Gwen Graham, with the help of a diverse group of dedicated partner organizations from across the state. The initiative encourages people to Donate, Volunteer, Visit, and Invest to support the region's long-term recovery efforts. For more information, visit <https://rebuild850.org/>.

About the Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation

The Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation began its work in 2004 with the charge from its founder to support transformational change for the benefit of mankind. The Foundation has consistently directed its primary efforts and resources toward matters of importance in human & social services, education, and health & medicine. It continues to do so today with a focus on investments that produce specific and measurable outcomes with a geographic emphasis on the Twin Cities (Minnesota) seven-county metropolitan area and Lee and Collier counties in Florida. In all of its activities, the foundation embraces its founder's beliefs in the value of innovation and in improving the lives of middle- and working-class families.

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