

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Adam Bink | Cell: 716-725-4569 | SpitfireCare@spitfirestrategies.com

Funders Come Together to Launch \$50 Million CARE Fund

Unprecedented collaborative fund will invest in care for all with respect and equity, creating quality, affordable care with fair wages and benefits for care workers

NEW YORK — Eight leading philanthropic organizations announced the formation of [The Care for All with Respect and Equity \(CARE\) Fund](#), a \$50 million, multi-year investment in bold, transformational change to build comprehensive care infrastructure that works for everyone. In this once-in-a-generation moment, The CARE Fund is bringing a powerhouse set of grantmakers together across issue areas. Committed and pledged funders include the Ford Foundation, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Schusterman Family Philanthropies, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Heising-Simons Foundation, Perigee Fund, Pivotal Ventures, and Open Society Foundations. Reflecting unprecedented public demand for change, major national foundations are pooling resources to support a broad-based movement for care that includes paid leave, child care and early education, long-term services and supports for older adults and people with disabilities, and high-quality jobs for all care workers.

Now more than ever, it is clear that care is essential for families and our economy to thrive. The COVID-19 pandemic revealed the cracks in a system built on underpaying a workforce predominately made up of women of color, and a culture that disregards women's unpaid care work and that fails to treat older adults and people with disabilities with dignity. The CARE Fund will leverage increased public and policymaker attention on these issues to create and invest in a movement for sustained, long-term change that is intergenerational and inclusive.

The CARE Fund, which has already issued its first grants, will invest in:

- **Broad-based movement building to amplify the voices** of those who provide and consume care, including parents, family caregivers, people with disabilities and older adults, home care workers, and early educators — so they are at the forefront of identifying and organizing for solutions that meet all their needs;
- **Organizing and advocacy for policy change** to promote equity across gender, race, age and disability through high-quality affordable early care and education, long-term services and supports for older adults and those with disabilities, universal paid family and medical leave, and other supports for family caregivers;
- **Sound implementation of new policies and investments** at the community level to ensure all children and families are able to thrive, especially families with low incomes and people of color;
- **Winning dignified living wages and benefits** for predominantly immigrant and women of color workers who provide care; and
- **Redefining both care work and care services as a permanent public good** worthy of public and private financing and long term investments by enhancing a deep narrative and culture shift in the way care is valued.

The CARE Fund, housed at Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, has already made \$2.5 million in rapid response grants to meet the urgency and opportunity of this moment. These grants include support for leading advocates who are coming together to hone strategies and build a broader, more powerful movement for care, including the Care Can't Wait campaign, Paid Leave for All, and the Childcare for Every Family Network, as well as networks organizing across issues and constituencies such as the

National Domestic Workers Alliance, Family Values @ Work, Caring Across Generations, the Diverse Elders Coalition and the American Association of People with Disabilities. The CARE Fund will invest both domestically and globally over the next five years.

“Caregiving is essential to helping children and families thrive,” said Dr. Richard Besser, president and CEO of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. “Caregivers themselves, often women of color, regularly face impossible choices between going to work during a pandemic, taking care of themselves and their families, and losing their jobs. My hope is that this new collaboration will lead to investment in systems that support the health and livelihoods of all children and families.”

“A stable, well-compensated early childhood workforce is both an economic backbone for working families and critical to young children’s learning in the first years of life,” said Barbara Chow, director of the Education program at the Heising-Simons Foundation. “This workforce, comprising largely women, many who are women of color, are paid poverty wages for their complex work. Early educators, along with other care professionals, form the essential infrastructure of the 21st century economy, and yet their work is undervalued as a result of structural racism and gender bias. The CARE Fund is an opportunity to redress these inequities with an intersectional and systemic lens.”

“The pandemic has spotlighted the indefensible gap between how much society depends on the care economy and how little we invest in it,” said Melinda French Gates, founder of Pivotal Ventures and co-chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. “This gap is detrimental to everyone — especially women, families, and people of color — and it hinders the overall economy. The CARE Fund is a collective effort to strengthen every part of our country’s care infrastructure. Ultimately, it’s about putting this issue at the center of the national conversation, which is right where it belongs since it’s already at the center of every family.”

“Undervaluing paid and unpaid caregiving puts immense stress on our families and our economy, and undermines our health,” said Becca Graves, Executive Director of Perigee Fund. “We need policies rooted in racial, gender, and economic justice that protect what is essential: the time to bond after a baby is born, the ability of a parent to earn a living, and the well-being of the professionals who care for our babies and elders when we cannot.”

“At the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, children are at the heart of everything we do,” said La June Montgomery Tabron, president and CEO of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. “Comprehensive, bold investments in what children and families of color need to be healthy and economically secure are necessary for lasting, transformational change to happen. The CARE Fund is uniquely positioned to do just that, bringing together a breadth of funders focused across issues of health, racial and gender equity, early childhood and worker justice to secure an economy that honors and values care.”

“We must care for the essential workers who care for our children and people who are sick and aging,” said Tom Perriello, Executive Director of Open Society-U.S. “The CARE Fund and #CareCan’tWait are designed to make sure we address our nation’s pre-existing conditions and build a care economy that guarantees paid leave, childcare and long-term care for all.”

“We cannot achieve racial, gender and economic justice without changing our policies and business practices to support caregivers and care workers with better pay and benefits, including paid leave,” said Stacy Schusterman, Chair of the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Philanthropies. “Women — particularly Black women and other women of color — and low-wage workers of all races bear the

burden of an economy that unfairly advances some at the expense of too many. The CARE Fund will push forward a vision of care work as deserving of greater recognition and financial support from businesses and our government.”

“The pandemic and economic crisis have made clear that a robust care infrastructure is key to advancing gender, racial and disability justice while fueling economic prosperity,” said Darren Walker, president of the Ford Foundation. “Ford is proud to support The CARE Fund, and to join a powerhouse collection of grantmakers who are addressing our national care crisis and ensuring equity, respect, and care for all.”

“The CARE Fund is a leading example of how philanthropic collaborations can help scale impact and spur systemic change from the household to the policy level,” said Heather Grady, vice president of environment, rights, and global development at Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors. “Recognizing the interrelationship between families, workers, social services and equity is key to addressing root causes, and the combined expertise of this group of philanthropic leaders and program partners will achieve significant impact on these complex issues.”

Leaders of The CARE Fund are available for comment on the launch of The CARE Fund, its goals and investment strategy. For more information, visit <https://carefund.org>.

###

[The Care for All with Respect and Equity Fund \(CARE\) Fund](#) is a multi-year investment in bold, transformational change to build care infrastructure that works for everyone. It is supported by Ford Foundation, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Schusterman Family Philanthropies, Heising-Simons Foundation, Perigee Fund, Pivotal Ventures, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and Open Society Foundations. The CARE Fund is a sponsored project of Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors.

Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors is a nonprofit organization that currently advises on and manages more than \$400 million in annual giving by individuals, families, corporations and foundations. Continuing the Rockefeller family’s legacy of thoughtful, effective philanthropy, RPA remains at the forefront of philanthropic growth and innovation, with a diverse team of experienced grantmakers with significant depth of knowledge across the spectrum of issue areas. Founded in 2002, RPA has grown into one of the world’s largest philanthropic service organizations and has facilitated more than \$3 billion in grantmaking to more than 70 countries. RPA currently serves as a fiscal sponsor for more than 90 projects, providing governance, management and operational infrastructure to support their charitable purposes.