



## News Release

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### **The Late Felix E. Martin, Jr. Gives \$50 Million to Muhlenberg County**

#### **War Veteran Turned Private Investor Leaves Unprecedented Gift To Address Educational, Civic & Cultural Needs**

Louisville, KY (December 4, 2008) – Felix E. Martin, Jr.’s wish for the place he called home is finally coming true.

Mr. Martin, who died November 15, 2007, determined in his final years that he wanted to make a significant and lasting difference for Muhlenberg County, Kentucky, his family’s home for more than 200 years. During his lifetime, he had amassed a fortune that few people knew about. At the direction of Roderick J. Tompkins, Sr., whom Felix counted as his closest friend and confidante, his wish is being realized today. The \$50 million gift to the residents of Muhlenberg County was announced this afternoon to a large crowd at the Multi-Ministry Center of Second Baptist Church in Greenville, Kentucky.

Through Mr. Martin’s generous gift, the Felix E. Martin, Jr. Charitable Foundation will last far into the future. Mr. Martin’s advisors chose the Community Foundation of Louisville as the administrative agent for the Felix E. Martin, Jr. Foundation because of its depth of expertise and experience working with people throughout the state to help them achieve their philanthropic goals.

“Mr. Martin’s gift marks a historical occasion for the residents of Muhlenberg County,” said Roderick J. Tompkins, Sr., Chairman of the Board for the Felix E. Martin, Jr. Foundation. “The transformation that is possible here, as a result of this gift, will be a testament to Felix’s deep love for his native Muhlenberg County.” Every year, part of the Foundation’s income stream will be used to make grants in Muhlenberg County.

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“This means that every year, more than \$1 million will be distributed to benefit Muhlenberg County,” Tompkins said.

The distribution of grants made possible by this gift will be part of a multiple-stage process that began earlier this year with the most in-depth needs assessment study ever undertaken in Muhlenberg County. Horizon Inform, a Louisville-based research company, interviewed more than 1,000 residents to learn what mattered most to them and how best to address these issues. Residents identified four areas of need: (1) Economic development; (2) Youth Services; (3) Substance Abuse Services and (4) Health and Human Services. The two areas that stood out as the greatest priorities were economic development and youth services. Two grants were announced that will have an immediate impact on these two areas. The first is \$150,000 over three years for 50% funding of a new UK Arts Extension Agent for Muhlenberg County. The second is \$110,000 over two years to immediately begin the School Counts scholarship program for Muhlenberg County High School seniors to attend Madisonville Community College. Going forward, Kathy Steward Jacobi, Chief Operating Officer for the Community Foundation of Louisville, explained how the future grants application process would work for the community: “First, a total of \$500,000 will be available in the initial open grants application period to achieve Mr. Martin’s vision of serving the educational, civic and cultural needs of the community.” Grants will be made at the level of \$50,000 or less and applications are available for submission any time up until March 6. To learn more or complete an application, visit [www.felixmartinfoundation.org](http://www.felixmartinfoundation.org). The Foundation will evaluate all applications, select those that will receive an award and announce grant recipients in June. All approved applications will directly benefit Muhlenberg County.

“Once this first part of the process is well under way, more collaborative work will be required to set priorities and figure out the best way to achieve the goals,” said Jacobi.

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“No one understands the needs of this county better than its own citizens, so the next part of this process will be to appoint a task force in January 2009 to participate in this process.” Since the needs assessment study showed that economic development and youth services were the two greatest needs, the task force will review these two areas and make recommendations to the board. Jacobi said she expects approximately \$1 million to be allocated to collaborative projects in these two areas during the next year.

This huge gift from Felix E. Martin, Jr. is important not only because of the transformational change it will bring to Muhlenberg County but also for the new tradition of philanthropy that it introduces to the community. “The research confirmed one thing we believed at the onset—Muhlenberg County has a wonderful history of charity,” said Dennis Riggs, President & CEO of The Community Foundation of Louisville.

Charity can be thought of as a “downstream” investment—one that has an immediate effect on people and touches lives directly, whereas philanthropy is an “upstream” investment—where work over the long term can create change in underlying conditions. “The payback from upstream investments is long-term and multi-generational,” Riggs said.

“This type of investing is what can have an amazing impact, and this research has identified where the citizens of Muhlenberg County feel that long-term impact needs to be.” According to Riggs, this gift has historical significance to Kentucky. “We’re not aware of any other county in the state that has a foundation of this size exclusively for the benefit of its residents. The Community Foundation of Louisville “is honored to have been selected to administer this program and we look forward to working closely with the residents of Muhlenberg County to make the best use possible of Mr. Martin’s incredible legacy for generations to come.”

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## **BACKGROUND**

### *About Felix E. Martin, Jr. Foundation*

The Felix E. Martin, Jr. Foundation was established by the Felix E. Martin, Jr. Trust in 2007. The Foundation is structured as a supporting organization of The Community Foundation of Louisville. Guided by its own board of directors, the Foundation's role is to carry out the wishes of the late Felix E. Martin, Jr., to address the educational, civic and cultural needs of Muhlenberg County residents. Earlier in 2008, the Felix E. Martin, Jr. Trust established two scholarship endowments, each for \$2.8 million, one to the University of Kentucky in Lexington, KY and the other to the McCallie School in Chattanooga, TN for the benefit of qualifying students from Muhlenberg County. For more details about the Foundation, call (270) 977-9194 or visit its Web site at: [www.felixmartinfoundation.org](http://www.felixmartinfoundation.org).

### *About The Community Foundation of Louisville*

The Community Foundation of Louisville is the largest community foundation in Kentucky, and in the top 50 in the country. The Community Foundation is a tax-exempt, public charity that has over \$285 million in assets held in charitable funds for more than 1,100 different donors. Grants and distributions from these funds support a wide range of cultural, educational and humanitarian programs according to each donor's specifications. The Foundation has five affiliate foundations in the state—in Owensboro and Daviess County, in Elizabethtown and Hardin County, in Shelbyville and Shelby County, in Bardstown and Nelson County, and in a four-county area around Danville, known as the Wilderness Trace Community Foundation. Since its inception in 1984 the Community Foundation has awarded more than \$330 million in grants. For more details about the Foundation's services, call (502) 585-4649 or visit its Web site at: [www.cflouisville.org](http://www.cflouisville.org).

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