



The Center for Advancing Opportunity Fact Sheet

TMCF is partnering with the Charles Koch Foundation and Koch Industries to establish the Center for Advancing Opportunity, which will support HBCU faculty and students interested in removing barriers to opportunities in fragile communities through educational programs and research. The partnership will catalyze an exchange of ideas within and about these communities that delivers evidence-based, research-informed solutions grounded in mutual benefit.

Partnership Information

Donor: Charles Koch Foundation and Koch Industries

Total Gift Amount: \$25.6 Million

Initial Gift Period: 5 Years

About the Center

The Center for Advancing Opportunity expands educational, social, and economic opportunities in our nation's most fragile communities through original research, educational programs, and direct engagement with residents. By listening to different community voices and supporting scholars and students passionate about making a positive difference, we work to empower people eager to put ideas into action and discover mutually beneficial solutions to bolster fragile communities across the country.

Headquartered in Washington, DC, the Center for Advancing Opportunity is a research and education initiative born out of a partnership with the Thurgood Marshall College Fund, the Charles Koch Foundation, and Koch Industries. The Center supports students and faculty at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) as well as other majority colleges and universities to develop research-based solutions to the most pressing issues in fragile communities.

Center Components

- **Original Research:** Supporting faculty at HBCUs working to develop research centers studying critical issues.
 - These campus research centers will help bring together multiple faculty members interested in education, criminal justice, and entrepreneurship.
 - Support for the campus research centers will include funding for research initiatives and undergraduate students studying these topics.
- **Scholarships:** Awarding scholarships to HBCU students pursuing careers in education, sociology, economics, and criminal justice research and awarding fellowships that will allow graduate researchers to study and research issues related to barriers to opportunity.
- **On-Campus Programming:** Supporting HBCU faculty working to bring speakers such as entrepreneurs, educators, and economists to campus to facilitate conversations for students about removing barriers and advancing opportunity.
- **Research and Polling:** Partnering with Gallup to create Gallup's TMCF/Koch Opportunity Index that will capture real sentiments of individuals living in fragile communities and foster public dialogue.
- **The State of Opportunity in America Forum:** Convening annually HBCU researchers and other national thought leaders to examine research findings and develop solutions.

Thurgood Marshall College Fund

The Thurgood Marshall College Fund (TMCF) is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt, charitable organization named for the U.S. Supreme Court's first African American Justice, Thurgood Marshall. TMCF is the only national organization that supports all Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) with member-schools including the 47 *publicly-supported* HBCUs. Since its inception in 1987, TMCF has helped students acquire a high-quality college education at an affordable cost, developed leaders of tomorrow, and connected high-performing students with top tier employment opportunities.

TMCF member-schools remain a vital source of higher education for all students; and, approximately 80% of all students enrolled in HBCUs attend TMCF member-schools. To date, TMCF has awarded more than \$250 million in assistance to its students and member-schools and we continue to direct 98% of all revenue directly to HBCU students and schools.

Charles Koch Foundation

For more than 50 years, Charles G. Koch has supported students and scholars who are focused on improving people's lives. The Charles Koch Foundation was created to continue this support through academic grants and educational initiatives. The Foundation works to advance an understanding of the benefits of free societies by supporting education and research that facilitates dialogue, sparks innovation, and creates opportunities for people to thrive.

Koch Industries

Based in Wichita, Kansas, Koch Industries, Inc. is one of the largest private companies in America with estimated annual revenues as high as \$100 billion, according to Forbes. It owns a diverse group of companies involved in refining, chemicals, biofuels and ingredients; forest and consumer products; fertilizers; polymers and fibers; process and pollution control equipment and technologies; electronic components; commodity trading; minerals; energy; ranching; glass; and investments. Since 2003, Koch companies have invested about \$80 billion in acquisitions and other capital expenditures. With a presence in more than 60 countries, Koch companies employ more than 100,000 people worldwide, with about 60,000 of those in the United States. From January 2009 to present, Koch companies have earned more than 1,000 awards for safety, environmental excellence, community stewardship, innovation, and customer service.

The Center for Advancing Opportunity

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: How did this partnership come about?

A: Two years ago TCMF's President & CEO, Johnny C. Taylor, Jr., heard Mr. Koch doing an interview on TV about eliminating barriers to opportunity and he sent him a letter about a new partnership idea. 48 hours after receipt of the letter, the Charles Koch Foundation called Johnny back to set up a meeting. This relationship has grown since that initial meeting.

Q: What is the vision of the Center for Advancing Opportunity?

A: Our vision is focused on advancing opportunity. The Center believes the best way to do that includes listening to individuals in fragile communities, supporting the researchers best positioned to explore communities' most pressing issues, and using those findings to inform solutions.

Q: What is a fragile community?

A: TCMF defines a fragile community as communities where residents — no matter their race or ethnicity — face significant barriers to opportunity. These communities are characterized by high crime, lack of quality educational options, and severely limited economic and social upward mobility opportunities.

Q: What is an HBCU?

A: An HBCU is a congressionally defined term that means Historically Black College and University. In order for a school to be considered an HBCU it must meet three criteria. It must be:

1. An accredited institution of higher learning;
2. Established before 1964; and
3. Created with the principal mission of educating black Americans.

HBCUs are historically black but not exclusively black. HBCUs offer educational opportunity to all students, regardless of race. Of the 101 HBCUs, 53 are public and 48 are private.

Q: What is the size of the gift?

A: It's a \$25.6 million gift over a five-year period.

Q: How long will the Center for Advancing Opportunity last?

A: The Center for Advancing Opportunity is a dynamic initiative. We're working for the next five years, and in that time, we'll learn, we'll evolve, and we'll be better positioned to support faculty and the communities they serve in the years beyond.

Q: How much money from this gift goes to each university research center?

A: The Center for Advancing Opportunity will tailor grants to university faculty based on the proposed research and programs.

Q: How many HBCU campus research centers will be funded and where will they be?

A: The campus research centers we support will be determined by the proposals we receive. We look forward to reviewing grant requests from many researchers working to expand their work in issues such as education, criminal justice, and entrepreneurship.

Q: What is the difference between the Washington, DC center and the campus research centers?

A: The headquarters Center for Advancing Opportunity, located in Washington, DC, serves as the administrator of grants and the coordinating body for all projects under the center – such as the annual research with Gallup and the student scholarships. Campus-based centers are faculty-driven and are focused on their individual research priorities, such as education, criminal justice, and entrepreneurship.

Q: How can I get more information about the annual State of Opportunity in America Forum?

A: As details are finalized during the planning stages of the program, we will provide additional information about the forum on our site:

<http://www.advancingopportunity.org/>

Q: Will the focus be more overall on criminal justice reform, education reform or entrepreneurship?

A: Ultimately, the focus will be dependent on the findings of the independent research conducted at each of the campus research centers.

Q: Does Charles Koch have a history of supporting HBCUs before this gift?

A: Yes. In 2014 the Charles Koch Foundation and Koch Industries Inc. provided a grant for a scholarship program to the UNCF. Additionally, some HBCU campuses have—like many of the more than 300 other schools the Charles Koch Foundation has supported—hosted reading groups, helped fund student travel, and expanded other educational opportunities.

Q: What would the partnership see as the best outcome from this gift?

A: The Charles Koch Foundation, Koch Industries and the Thurgood Marshall College Fund expect to empower faculty to uncover new discoveries that can dramatically expand opportunities in fragile communities.

Q: What are the major components of the center?

A: The center is responsible for the following items:

- *Original Research:* Supporting faculty at HBCUs working to develop research centers studying critical issues.
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