



## **Edna Martin Christian Center receives a \$5 million Lilly Endowment Human Services Initiative Grant**

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The Edna Martin Christian Center (EMCC) has received a grant of \$5 million as part of Lilly Endowment Inc.'s commitment to helping human service organizations that strive to improve the lives of low-income individuals and families and strengthen their communities in Indianapolis and throughout the state.

EMCC is a faith-based human service organization founded to serve the needs of children and their families in Marion County. EMCC has a 76-year history of successfully delivering comprehensive services to children and families. Through education, workforce development, and community health programs and services, EMCC strives to help individuals, families, and communities overcome obstacles so they can thrive.

EMCC will use \$4.5 million of the Lilly Endowment funds to establish an endowment. The balance of the funds will be used to strengthen financial systems; implement fund development strategies; and scale up personnel and infrastructure to prepare for expansion of its early childhood and youth development services. EMCC currently operates a Level 3 Paths to Quality childcare and preschool at its main location at 2605 E.25th Street. It will develop a second site to add older PreK classrooms and expand school age youth options.

"The Lilly Endowment investment will strengthen our operations so we can continue to serve as a strong community partner to families," said Tysha Hardy-Sellers, Executive Director of EMCC.

"Specifically, there is a growing need for childcare and youth services within Marion County, but a particularly critical need on the near northeast side of Indianapolis. By providing quality youth options and supportive services to parents, we can help families meet their goals and be a strong partner in the transformation neighborhoods."

Lilly Endowment is making a total of \$100 million in grants to 15 organizations through this initiative to help them enhance their long-term impact by building stronger financial futures. Many of the organizations will use their grants to establish endowments or fortify an existing endowment so they can have more flexibility and greater capacity to work strategically.

These grants complement the Endowment's regular support for human service organizations, including grants to the United Way of Central Indiana.

The organizations provide a variety of services to help low-income individuals and families. Ten of the grants are supporting community/neighborhood centers. Five of the grants will help organizations that frequently collaborate with community centers, providing counseling and other mental health services; food programs; daytime services to homeless individuals and families; and education, employment and health services.

"The grants offer transformative opportunities for the organizations to secure strong financial futures," said Ace Yakey, Lilly Endowment's vice president for community development. "Unlike support for day-to-day operations, these funds will help each organization strengthen its financial infrastructure so it can serve more people over the long-term and weather unexpected financial challenges. These grants do not alleviate the need for the organizations

to attract ongoing support for their efforts. Indeed, we hope the grants will help them more effectively attract support for their important work.”

“The Board of Directors, staff and supporters are extremely grateful of the long-standing support from Lilly Endowment and its selection of EMCC as one of its Human Service grant recipients. This grant will help us continue to provide the needed outreach and services to residents. We are encouraged that this will also help us bring attention to the needs of families so others can join us as volunteers, donors, or supporters of our mission to break the poverty cycle and restore families and neighborhoods,” said Natalie Weir, EMCC Board President.

**Lilly Endowment Inc.** is an Indianapolis-based private philanthropic foundation created in 1937 by three members of the Lilly family - J.K. Lilly Sr. and sons J.K. Jr. and Eli - through gifts of stock in their pharmaceutical business, Eli Lilly & Company. The Endowment is primarily committed to the causes of community development, education and religion and has a special commitment to its hometown, Indianapolis, and its home state, Indiana.

### **About Edna Martin Christian Center**

The Edna Martin Christian Center was founded in the 1930s and incorporated in 1941. Currently, the organization operates a network of neighborhood action hubs to reach residents with programs and services that focus on education, workforce development, and support community health. Our work spans Marion County as we operate out of a base location at 37 Place, our new Leadership and Legacy campus, IPS schools, and provide vocational training services at partnered employer sites.

Our goals are to:

1. Ensure youth have the skills to succeed in school and life through our early childhood development center — Edna Martin Childcare Ministry & Preschool— and school-age Academic Support Center at the Leadership & Legacy Academy
2. Heads of households have the skills and resources they need to move from crisis to stabilization to asset development using our Center for Working Families and Vocational Training and Employment model
3. Residents in the communities we serve have their basic needs met through skill-building programs, emergency abatement services, and community-building volunteer efforts which help develop a vibrant, safe and strong community with healthy, stable and engaged residents

Edna Martin Christian Center offers traditional community services, but also has broadened its approach to incorporate compatible business models for traditional youth service, workforce development, and community economic development. EMCC offers income scalable services and has a social enterprise in the form of a restaurant that serves as a workforce development incubator. Additionally, through its acquisition of the former Jireh Sports complex, it has now entered into community development by investing in urban renewal of 3 city blocks in the Martindale Brightwood neighborhood.