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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **\$200,000 Raised to Ensure Teacher Excellence in Sarasota County** ***Education Foundation of Sarasota County Reaches Goal to Honor Lori White***

Sarasota, FL (April 3, 2017) – Jennifer Vigne, President of the Education Foundation of Sarasota County, eagerly announced on March 31<sup>st</sup> the organization received over 140 donations to meet its \$150,000 fundraising goal to establish The Lori White Endowment Fund. This accomplishment triggered a \$50,000 capping grant from the Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation.

The Lori White Endowment Fund will provide unique professional development opportunities for teachers. The goal was met thanks to charitable donors including members of the Education Foundation Board of Directors and long-term supporters, area community foundations and numerous individuals whose gifts expressed deep gratitude for Lori White’s dedication to education in Sarasota County.

“It was incredible to have so many donors give to not only honor Lori White but, more importantly, to support teachers in our community,” noted Vigne. “It is a privilege for the Education Foundation of Sarasota County to establish a fund that will elevate our educators and ultimately provide opportunities for growth.”

To raise the funds necessary to meet the capping grant challenge, the Education Foundation launched a “Forty for 40” campaign to honor White’s 40 years of service on January 20, 2017, forty days from White’s official retirement as Superintendent of Sarasota County Schools. With a focus on social media outreach that included a crowd funding component, the forty days of giving brought in over \$47,000 in donations of \$25 to \$2,500 from teachers, students, parents, administrators and community leaders.

“Investing in the professional capacity of teachers is one of the best ways to improve student academic achievement,” said Teri A. Hansen, President|CEO of the Barancik Foundation. “The Lori White Endowment Fund will ensure Sarasota County continues the tradition of education excellence shaped under Superintendent White’s leadership.”

Donations can still be made to the Lori White Endowment Fund online by visiting [EdFoundationsrq.org](http://EdFoundationsrq.org) or calling 941-927-0965.

**About the Education Foundation of Sarasota County**

The Education Foundation of Sarasota County is a supporting partner that exponentially enhances the educational experiences available to the children of Sarasota County. Its mission is to strengthen the community by investing in educational opportunities for the students, teachers and schools. The Foundation works to match donor's passions with high-impact projects and initiatives that help every child in Sarasota County rise to their full potential. It achieves this mission through scholarships, access to advanced technology, supplies needed for creativity to flourish and funds for educators' professional development. The Education Foundation of Sarasota County and its philanthropic investors are champions for students, teachers and schools.

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