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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Education Foundation of Sarasota County meets \$200,000 target
to top off Shirley A. Ritchey Endowment Fund \$1 million goal**

Barancik Foundation and Koski capping grants help achieve success

Sarasota, Fla. (Jan 22, 2019) – After a heartfelt showing of philanthropic support from the community, Education Foundation of Sarasota County President Jennifer Vigne announced that the Shirley A. Ritchey Endowment Fund has met a \$200,000 campaign challenge to lift the endowment to its \$1 million goal.

“We could not think of a more fitting honor for Shirley Ritchey and community leaders who established the Education Foundation than to celebrate its 30th anniversary by strengthening long-term sustainability and flexibility to continue responding to and advocating for the needs of our future students, teachers and schools,” Vigne said.

Capping grants of \$30,000 each, committed by Sarasota philanthropists Tom and Sherry Koski and the Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation, were contributed when over 150 donors raised \$140,000 during the campaign drive.

Tom Koski, education champion and past Education Foundation board chair, established the endowment fund-topping challenge last year as the organization’s 30th anniversary launched. Beverly Koski, Tom’s mother, served as the Education Foundation’s board chair 20 years ago and was instrumental in founding the organization’s signature grants program.

“It was incredibly inspiring to have so many donors give in recognition that the grassroots organization created in 1988 has grown into an essential philanthropic partner to Sarasota County Schools by investing in innovative programs and initiatives that enrich students’ learning experiences,” Koski said.

“We congratulate the Education Foundation on their success in building the endowment that will create long-term sustainability for their work and enable them to concentrate on innovations that help students prepare for their futures,” said Teri A Hansen, president and CEO of Barancik Foundation.

Achieving the Shirley A. Ritchey Endowment Fund goal will give the organization unrestricted support in perpetuity to fulfill its mission to enhance the potential of students, promote excellence in teaching and inspire innovation in education guided by strategic philanthropy.

Vigne said, “We are most grateful to Tom and Sherry Koski and the Barancik Foundation for helping us reach the challenge campaign goal. There is much more to come and we will be inviting the community to engage with us in expanding our work and outreach in behalf of our students, teachers and community.”

Donations still can be made to the Shirley A. Ritchey Endowment Fund online by visiting EdFoundationsrq.org or calling 941-927-0965.

About Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation

The Charles and Margery Barancik family has long believed in the power of philanthropy to shape our world and enrich the lives of all people. It was the expression of this belief that led them in 2014 to establish the Charles & Margery Barancik Foundation—a private, family foundation located in Sarasota, Fla. The Barancik Foundation creates initiatives and awards grants in Sarasota and beyond in the areas of education, humanitarian causes, arts and culture, the environment, and medical research. Visit BarancikFoundation.org to learn more.

About the Education Foundation

The Education Foundation of Sarasota County is an independent partner working to advance philanthropic support for Sarasota County Schools. Its mission is to enhance the potential of students, promote excellence in teaching and inspire innovation in education. Guided by the belief that education changes lives, the Education Foundation strives to match each donor's passion with high-impact projects created to ensure students graduate with purpose and are prepared for a postsecondary pathway. The Education Foundation of Sarasota County and its philanthropic investors are champions for students, teachers and schools. For more information on how to be a champion for education, visit EdFoundationSRQ.org.

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