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Knight Foundation and other Fund members work with the community to create systemic change in four areas: the region's ability grow businesses, develop talent, be inclusive, and help local governments more efficiently and effectively govern.

“The Fund has been successful in engaging the region’s philanthropists to focus on transforming our region to a high growth economy,” said Jennifer Thomas, Akron program director for Knight Foundation. “Its ability to help leverage investment into the region had contributed to its success.”

“Knight Foundation has been a strong advocate and partner in shaping Northeast Ohio’s economic strategy since the Fund’s inception in 2004,” said Dave Abbott, chairman, Fund for Our Economic Future. “We are pleased that Knight Foundation has chosen to continue its support of the Fund and will continue to collaborate and attract and generate more jobs and investments in our region.”

The Fund is making strong progress in its mission to transform the economy of Northeast Ohio. Most significantly, the Fund has convened the region’s education, government, business, labor, and civic leaders to implement an economic action plan, Advance Northeast Ohio.

Formed in 2004, the Fund for Our Economic Future encourages and advances a regional competitiveness agenda (called Advance Northeast Ohio or ANEO) which will lead to long-term economic revitalization that strengthens our region’s core cities, encourages inclusion and enhances the region’s quality of life.

With the addition of Knight Foundation, there are 55 members of the Fund.

Since 2004, the Fund has raised more than $70 million to support regional economic competitiveness initiatives.

“Knight Foundation’s renewal speaks to their long-standing commitment to and leadership in reinventing the Greater Akron community and Northeast Ohio,” said Fund President Brad Whitehead. “Through involvement in the Fund, Knight Foundation will continue to position the Greater Akron community as a leader in the new regional economy during this time of economic recovery.”

Akron is among 26 Knight Communities across the nation where Knight Foundation focuses on

supporting projects that foster an informed and engaged community.

The Fund is collaborating with partners in the private and public sector to implement the region's economic action plan, Advance Northeast Ohio. The plan has four focus areas: business attraction and growth, talent development, racial and economic inclusion and government collaboration and efficiency.