



CHARLES STEWART
MOTT FOUNDATION

WILLIAM S. WHITE
PRESIDENT

September 16, 2014

Dear community foundation practitioners and conference participants:

First of all, congratulations on the 20th anniversary of the Healthy City Community Foundation in Banska Bystrica! The Mott Foundation Trustees have very fond memories of visiting Banska Bystrica in 1995. Even at that early stage, we could see that something important was happening there. I am very pleased that the community foundation movement has grown and developed to such a scale and in such exciting ways in Central and Eastern Europe. It has been an honor for the Mott Foundation—and for me personally—to have been part of this development during this period. With this anniversary, and the centennial celebration of the Cleveland Community Foundation in the United States, 2014 is indeed a historic year for community foundations the world over.

The progress that has been made is a result of the hard work and dedication of people such as yourselves working every day in your communities to build trust and bring people together to do wonderful, life-changing things. Beyond the financial resources community foundations bring to the table, the convening and leadership role you play is a big part of your added value. Local communities in your region and around the world are being challenged in ways no one envisioned 100 or even 20 years ago, and yet the idea that people in the community working together can address these challenges and improve their community through a community foundation has not changed. I don't believe it will change. The community foundation remains vital to how we will continue to build and strengthen communities.

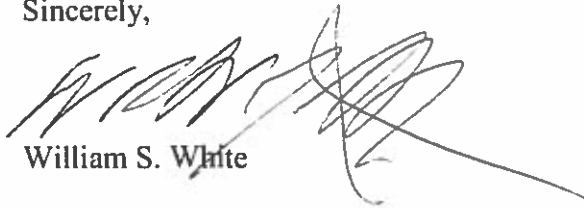
This doesn't mean community foundations have nothing to learn and no reason to evolve and innovate. The field is highly dynamic, and new and better approaches are being developed all the time. One of the most exciting aspects of working on community foundation development in Central and Eastern Europe for Mott has been the opportunity to learn from the ways the idea has been put into practice in communities in this region. Many community foundation practitioners from the United States and Western Europe that traveled to your region to *share* their experience returned with new ideas—and new enthusiasm—based on what they saw and heard from

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you. It is clear that we have a lot to learn from each other. For Mott, networking and collaboration across the community foundation field globally is a key priority for our programming. In part, we know this is important because we experienced it in Central and Eastern Europe first.

I am sorry that I could not join you in Bratislava for this important conference and celebration. I wish you tremendous success over the next several days—and the next several decades. We look forward to your continued success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William S. White', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

William S. White

WSW:lm

