



Fact Sheet July 2020

Background

After years of dialogue, planning, and authentic community engagement with partners, residents, and community leaders, the trustees of the J. Marion Sims Foundation voted to change the organization's name to the Arras Foundation in early 2019. The word "arras" means a diverse tapestry; the new name reflects the Foundation's 25-year history of weaving together community assets to grow healthier communities in Lancaster County, Great Falls, and Fort Lawn, South Carolina.

For almost 2 years, trustees and staff have worked diligently to carve this path, together with the community, choosing a name that reflects the mission and work of the Foundation. The organization enjoyed the creative partnership of the School for the Visual Arts in Manhattan, where students worked together in a semester-long process to design the Foundation's new logo (young professionals under the tutelage of famed marketing experts Tom Geismar and Sagi Haviv, known for creating brands for NBC, National Geographic, PBS, the Smithsonian, and others). Trustees and staff have worked to finalize all legal, regulatory, and administrative components of the new name and brand. This included intentionally ensuring the new name matched how the Foundation shows up in the community and prioritizes:

- Growing a healthier community, together;
- Weaving together community assets – people, places, and organizations; and
- Ensuring people and their voices are heard

Translating the Work into Action

The Foundation established a North Star in 2016 that will continue to guide its work: *We envision the communities we serve as places where everyone joins together to build on community assets for current and future generations, and where everyone has the opportunity to reach their full potential.* The Foundation could not fulfill its North Star, reach its full philanthropic potential, and authentically engage with everyone in the community without change, backed by action. The previous name (J. Marion Sims Foundation) was a barrier to working collaboratively with all members of the community.

The new name – the Arras Foundation – reflects the tradition of the Foundation's work over a quarter century – weaving together investments and partnerships to support and strengthen the diverse tapestry of people, organizations, and places in the region. The Arras Foundation will continue its long-standing work of promoting the health and well-being of residents in the communities of Fort Lawn, Great Falls, and Lancaster, SC, building on the collective wisdom of the people who live here. We look forward to working together with the entire community to continue to "see the possible." The next chapter in our history has begun.