



◀ Robert G. Luke, M.D.,  
Charuhas V. Thakar, M.D.

## Gift establishes kidney research chair

A visionary gift honors a University of Cincinnati pioneer in kidney hypertension research and treatment. The \$1 million anonymous gift has helped to create the Robert G. Luke, M.D. Endowed Chair in Nephrology at the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine's Division of Nephrology and Hypertension.

This chair recognizes the work of Robert Luke, a pioneer in kidney and hypertension research, treatment and medical ethics, and chair of UC's Department of Internal Medicine from 1988 until 2004.

At a recent meeting, the UC board of trustees approved Charuhas V. Thakar, M.D., professor of medicine and director of the division, to hold this chair in nephrology, which also was supported through matching gifts by the college and alumni donors.

Thakar was recruited to UC as an assistant professor in 2004, during Luke's tenure as the department chair, and appointed as the division director in 2014. He is nationally recognized in his discipline for his creativity and innovation, as well as clinical and educational excellence.



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## GCF, Cincinnati Black Giving Circle award grants to drive racial equity

Greater Cincinnati Foundation, in partnership with the Cincinnati Black Giving Circle, awarded \$115,000 to six Black-led or Black-serving nonprofits in the Cincinnati area.

The Cincinnati Black Giving Circle, a coalition of African Americans in support of social change, allows donors with shared cultural roots to direct their giving purposefully through awarding grants to deserving nonprofits.

### Cincinnati Black Giving Circle Awardees:

- **Found Village**, which empowers teens who have faced traumas to reach their full potential, received a \$25,000 grant to support staff who coordinate volunteers as well as coaches and mentor youth.
- **Rosemary's Babies**, which provides educational and financial support for pre-teen and teen parents and their families, received a \$20,000 grant to support staff salaries and operational overhead.
- **The D.A.D. Initiative**, which readies children of color for a

successful future by teaching essential skills not traditionally offered in schools, received a \$20,000 grant to support staff contracts.

- **Cincinnati Preschool Promise**, which works to ensure equitable access to high-quality preschools and better preparation for future schooling, received a \$20,000 grant to provide business services to the owners of mostly Black-owned, in-home childcare providers.
- **Ohio Justice Policy Center (OJPC)**, a nonprofit law firm that advocates for fair and equal justice by offering free legal services, received a \$15,000 grant to provide services for single mothers pursuing their secondary education.
- **Housing Opportunities Made Equal (HOME)**, which advocates and enforces housing regulations, received a \$15,000 grant to provide families with legal support to maintain stable and healthy housing amidst heightened economic instability.

## First Financial's Cincinnati workforce donates 3,700 hours, \$1.7 million

First Financial Bank and its associates responded to a difficult year in 2020 by giving \$1.7 million in contributions and 3,700 volunteer hours by its Cincinnati workforce. Overall, the four-state, locally based bank gave \$3.5 million in financial contributions and more than 8,900 hours in volunteer service. "We are proud to be making a positive difference in our communities, especially in light of

the struggles we all shared last year," said Roddell McCullough, the bank's director of community development. While First Financial's associates were generous with their time in the community last year, volunteering required a different approach because of COVID-19, the need for social distancing, and limitations on available in-person volunteer opportunities.