



LEADING WITH  
**Courage**

Reshaping Southern Philanthropy for a New Era

Philanthropy  
**SOUTHEAST**

Together for Change

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Credit: Foundation for Appalachian Kentucky

## Building Bridges Between Philanthropy and Government

**G**overnment has long been a black box to many in philanthropy. But increasingly, government is recognizing the value of partnering with foundations and others in philanthropy to coordinate efforts to create a stronger social safety net, respond to crises, and pursue systemic solutions to longstanding problems.

That's what led the North Carolina Office of Strategic Partnerships and some foundations in North Carolina to create a new position within the state's government: philanthropy liaison.

Joy Vermillion Heinsohn, formerly assistant director at the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation in Winston-Salem, is the first such liaison—working to forge partnerships and foster collaboration between philanthropy, research institutions, and nonprofits.

"My job is about trying to build and create resources for both state government and philanthropy to learn more about one another, understand how the other works, and identify ways that we might be able to work better together," Vermillion Heinsohn said.

Early work has aimed to coordinate efforts around the American Rescue Plan and address digital equity.

And while such positions are still rare at the state and federal levels, Vermillion Heinsohn said she has been hearing from other states that are interested in exploring similar efforts to build bridges between government and philanthropy.



Photo Credit (clockwise from top right):  
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